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June, 1969

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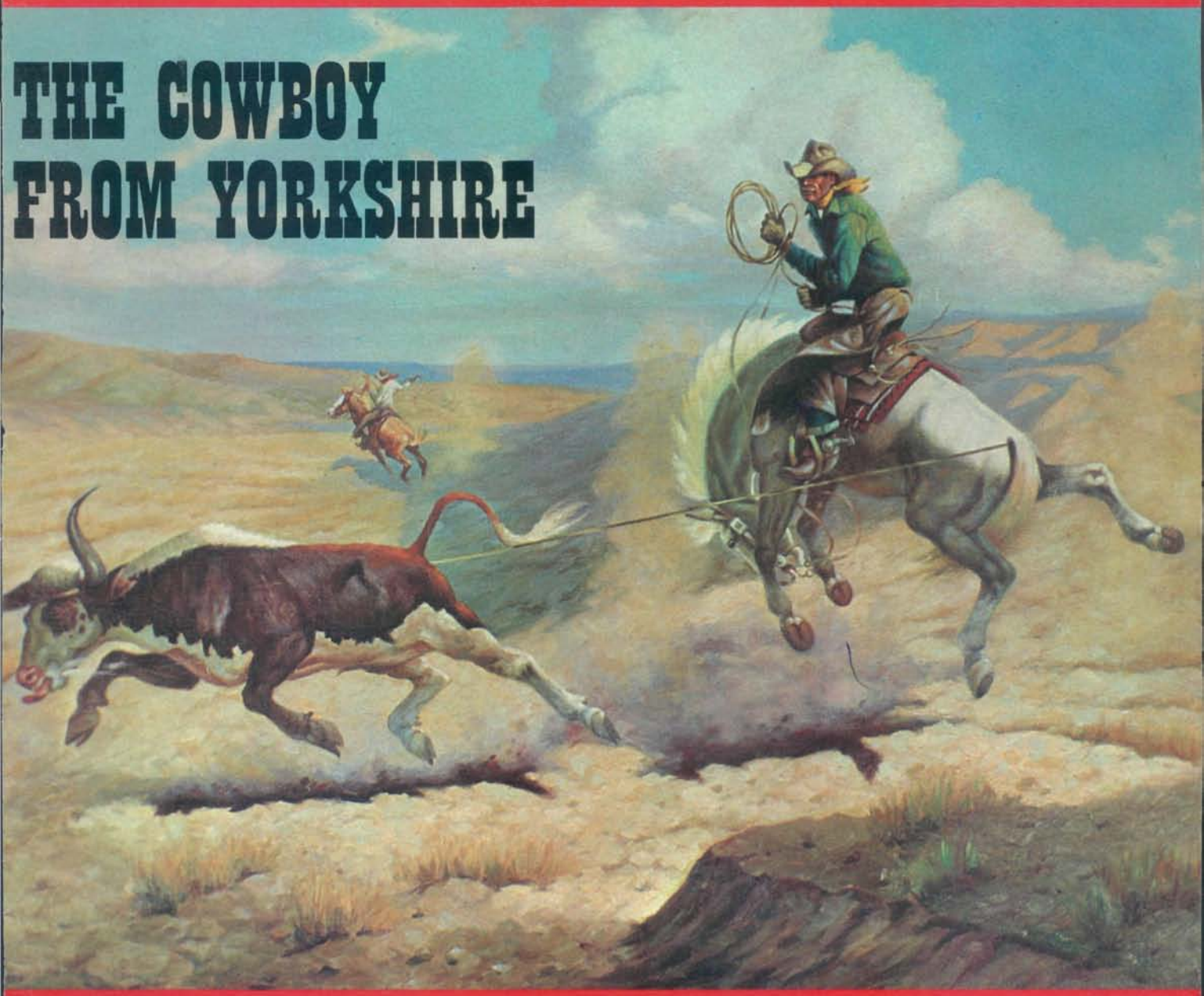

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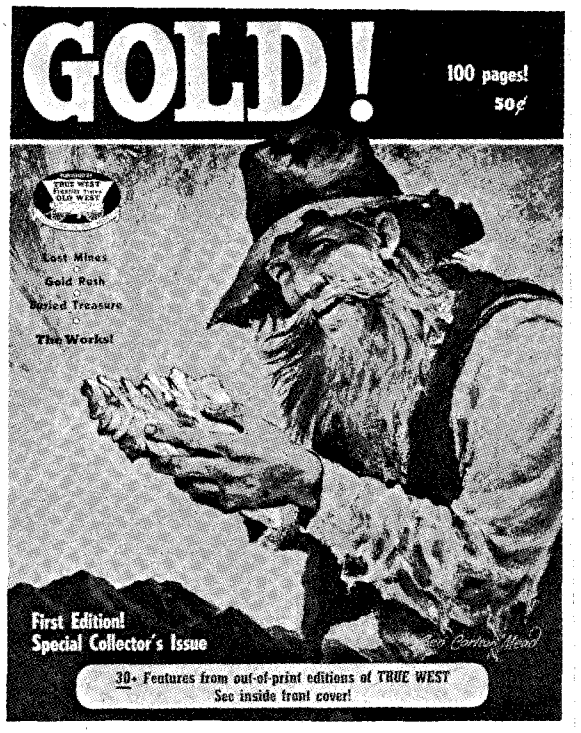

In This Issue

PEDRO LOCO . . . . . By J. Frank Dobie 2
MAXIMILIAN'S GOLD . . . . . By J. A. Rickard 5
THE LOST DUTCH OVEN MINE . . . . . By Walter H. Miller 6
GOLDEN SANDS OF WHISKEY RUN . . . . . By Francis E. Sell 8
LOST PADRE MINE . . . . . By J. Charles Davis 10
HAZE OVER CHILKOOT . . . . . By Charles McKenzie with Mac Hecht 12
SPIRIT CURSE OF THE LOST FRENCHMAN'S GOLD . . By Lyndon Ripley 14
DUTCHMAN'S LOST MINE FOUND? . . . . . By George R. Monagan 16
NOT THE WILL OF GOD . . . . . By J. Frank Dobie 18
LOST CEMENT MINE . . . . . By Chick Oldham 21
GHOSTS OF GOLD AND GLORY . . . . . By Nell Murbarger 22
THE TRUTH ABOUT THE DUTCHMAN'S LOST MINE By Barney Barnard 30
HOW THE DUTCHMAN GOT HIS GOLD! . . . . . By John A. Taylor 33
60 BILLION DOLLARS IN LOST GOLD . . . . . By Ralph Coniston 34
THE TREASURE IS ALWAYS THERE! . . . . . By J. Frank Dobie 38
DID THE DUTCHMAN FIND MONTEZUMA'S TREASURE? By Carl Howe 40
HERE LIES BURIED TREASURE! . . . . . By Tamara Andreeva 42
THE LOST BREYFOGLE MINE . . . . . By J. Frank Dobie 44
APACHE GOLD . . . . . By George Dillon 48
I STILL DIG FOR BURIED TREASURE . . . . . By Josh Drake, Jr. 50
HERMIT'S GOLD . . . . . By Jim Allison 52
RODS TO RICHES . . . . . By Peter Reid 55
RING-TAILED ROARER . . . . . By Nell Murbarger 56
MADMAN OF THE SUPERSTITIONS . . . . . By R. O. Ackerman 62
WASH BARKER AND THE ROCK PENS . . . . . By J. Frank Dobie 65
CINDERELLA OF THE COMSTOCK LODE . . . . . By B. P. Sullivan 68
LOST MINE OF THE KLICKITAT . . . . . By Tom Wright 76
MYSTERY OF THE DUTCHMAN'S LOST MINE 79
NUGGETS . . . . . By Hal McClure 87
POTATO CREEK JOHNNIE'S BIG FIND . . . . . By Lois Miller 88
DOES THE LOST SAN SABA MINE REALLY EXIST? . . By John A. Masters 94
TREASURE BOOK ROUNDUP 97

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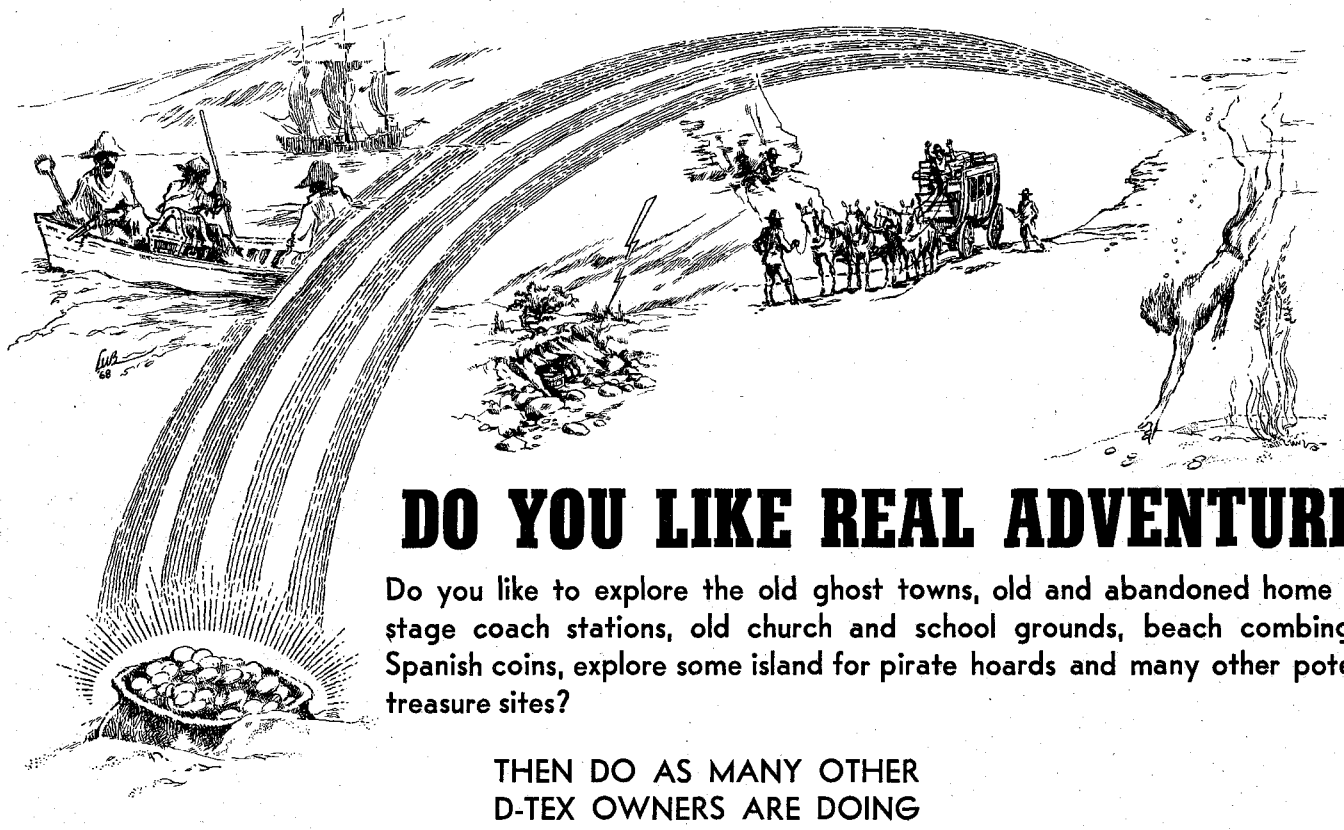

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True West

All True—All Fact—Stories of the Real West

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"The files of TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES are going to be of great historical value and should be preserved in all the libraries of the country."—Walter Prescott Webb, former President, American Historical Association.

In This Issue—

TRULY WESTERN 4

THE FRENCH LADY'S TREASURE ..... By Reno "Dad" Ingles and Richard Summers 6

SCOUTING THE UTES ..... By Milton W. Callon 12

DID RUSSIA INTRODUCE THE HORSE? ..... By Choral Pepper 18

THE COWBOY FROM YORKSHIRE ..... By Colin Rickards 20

HOW GREEN IS A BULLFROG? ..... By Gus A. Wurdinger 22

THOSE MURDERING HERRICKS ..... By J. R. Kirkpatrick 27

THE DEATH WATCH ..... By Maurice Kildare 28

LEADVILLE'S ICE PALACE ..... By Hank Givens 30

TO MY TORMENTORS, I BEQUEATH ..... By Larry Holden 34

CHARLIE SIRINGO AND "EAT EM UP JAKE" ..... By Eve Ball 36

WILD OLD DAYS 38

"SUICIDE TED" ELDER ..... By Milt Hinkle and Mildred Elder 40

TRAILS GROWN DIM 43

WESTERN BOOK ROUNDUP 45

TUMBLEWEEDS ..... By Tom K. Ryan 72

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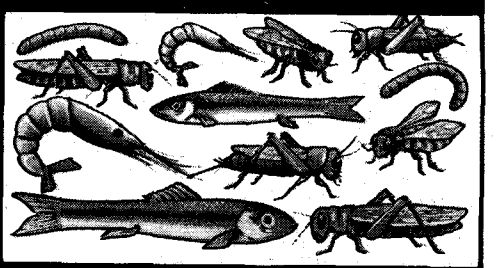

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Sage, Wyoming

Dear Sirs:

I enlisted in the army in July of last year and was sent here to Fort Ord for my basic training. The week before my graduation I was put into the hospital.

While in the ward I came across a TRUE WEST magazine and I was very interested in a story called "Bear River Loot" in your August issue. The name of Sage, Wyoming was mentioned, which is just a tiny speck on the map nowadays. But my father has told me a number of stories about Sage and how rough and rowdy it was there, as he had been raised in that country and had helped to drive many cattle to Sage to be shipped out by rail.

In his younger day—from the time he was thirteen to the time he got married when in his early thirties, he was one of the best bronc busters in northeastern Utah and southwestern Wyoming. This all the old-timers can vouch for, also. All of them still can tell about him when he was just a mere boy and could outride the best around that area.

He is out usually every day, seven days a week, as he works on one of the ranches and is still a very active cowboy. Although he is sixty years old, he can still ride some real mean horses. I've seen him do it.—Pvt. H. R. Nebeker, Fort Ord Hospital Ward D-7, Fort Ord, California 93941

Grey Wolves of the Badlands

Dear Editor:

In the November and December TRUE WEST was an article that interested me very much, written by Scott L. Smith about the grey wolf of the Badlands. I was born seventy years ago north of Dickinson, North Dakota at Fayette, and am very familiar with the country around Medora. As a youngster I stayed with my uncle on his ranch on the edge of the Badlands. Every spring he'd locate a den of these grey wolves and watch when the old would leave a den. He'd have me go into the den and look for the pups and always had a rope tied to my legs to pull me out. Them were the days.—Frank H. Blank, Box 131, Pollock Pines, California 95726

Oil Field Boomers

Dear Joe:

Speaking of oil field booms, I came to Cut Bank, Montana in 1934 and during my two years in that area I met many old "boomers" who now are long gone and are either drilling or laying pipe lines for the Lord or the Devil. They included such boomers as Blackie Burns, Red Carr, Alabam', The Kid, Cowboy Whitey, Round the Corner Kelley, Muck Pole Slim, Mile Post Johnny, Crip Wilson and, of course, J. H. Aronson who was better known as "The Gallopin' Swede." They were rough and tough, and some were hard drinkers, but a wonderful bunch of boomers and I'm glad I got to know them.—Walt Thayer, Wenatchee, Wisconsin.

Kansas Lawmen

Dear Joe:

A note regarding Jay J. Kalez and Pink Simms' remarks about Kansas lawmen during the trail driving era. My grandfather made three trips to Kansas on cattle drives, and I asked him about those shooting cowboys. He told me that he only saw one cowboy shot. He did say that most of the time the cowboys got drunk and were rolled of their wages and that the lawmen were partners with the saloon people in the rolling operations. Earp didn't make a big impression on him—if he ever saw Earp, as he was not mentioned. I do remember him talking about Cortez, the one that killed Sheriff Morris of Karnes County, Texas as being a mean hombre. Men had to be tough before my grandfather would say they were mean hombres.—Bill Barfield, 938 Cunningham St., Corpus Christi, Texas 78411.

Butterfield Stage Line

Dear Mr. Small:

I enjoyed Mr. Kubista's article on the old Butterfield Stage Line (October 1968 TRUE WEST). As he mentioned we had the San Antonio-San Diego mail line in operation before the Butterfield Line took over. Fares from San Diego were as follows: Fort Yuma, $40; Tucson, $80; El Paso, $125; and San Antonio, $200. The San Antonio-San Diego posted a list of articles which they recommended passengers take along. Just reading this list will tell you more about what the trip was like than the most elaborate description: one Navy Colt revolver and two pounds of lead balls, one belt with holster, knife and sheath, one pair thick boots, three pairs wool socks, three woolen undershirts and underpants, three woolen shirts, one overcoat, one wide-awake hat, a sack coat, blankets, a rubber ground cloth, a bag containing a sponge, needles and thread, a hairbrush, comb and three towels!—H. J. Reed Jr., 316 San Antonio Avenue, San Diego, California 92106

John Shirley-Belle Starr

I am writing to TRUE WEST about the Shirley-Starr family as I have been contacted several times during the past few years by writers doing history on Belle Starr and have been disappointed in their research into her background. Perhaps someone who reads this has taken the time to dig it out instead of accepting the fabricated background created by the writers of the 1800s.

Although some in the family would just as soon forget that John was ever connected in any way to our Shirleys, none of them has ever denied his kinship. John Shirley's family was "not allowed on the place" by Samuel Perry when both resided in Texas. Granddad (Samuel Mack Shirley) spoke of his cousin "Belle" as an example of how his children "shouldn't" behave. He was ashamed of her but never denied his kinship.

I have read one writer's account that "all of John's kin" were no good. If he had bothered to check, he would have learned differently. I also read that Belle's grandfather Samuel was not ashamed of her. He died in 1842 some time before her birth. Some of the things which have been written about Belle and her family are pure fiction and some of it can be irritating.

I can't do anything about her history but I can prove that not all her family or ancestors were "no good" and hope to get some more information through this letter. Then I will be ready for the next "historian" who pops up asking questions about my illustrious ancestor!

I would like to correspond with those having knowledge of the ancestry of John Shirley and his wife, the parents of Belle Starr. I need full names, dates and places and will trade information. Hopefully, it will turn up all of John's brothers and sisters. The following is from our family records.

Samuel Shirley was born in Virginia and went to Blountville, Tennessee with his brother-in-law Dr. Hugh Barton. It was here that Sam met and married Phoebe Cook (born in New York). They moved to Caldwell County, Kentucky and had at least three sons: John, Samuel Perry, and Elijah. Danial is also said to have been a son, but he could have been a brother instead. The stories of the sons:

1. John Shirley: father of Belle Starr. The family referred to him as the "black sheep" even before his daughter's capers.

2. Samuel Perry Shirley: born 1824 in Caldwell County, Kentucky he was a member of the Blackwell-Shirley tobacco firm of Louisville, Kentucky in the 1860s. His first wife, Clarissa Sigler, bore him eight children. His second wife, Martha Ann Stephens (or Stevens), one-half Cherokee and daughter of Jesse Stephens/Stevens of Crittenden County, Kentucky bore him ten children, one of whom was my grandfather. Samuel resided in Kentucky until 1875, then set-

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tled at Jack County, Texas. Later they moved near Duncan in Indian Territory where he died in 1901.

3. Dr. Elijah Steven Shirley: born 1828 in Caldwell County, Kentucky he was orphaned at age fourteen. He received his medical training in Alabama, Kansas, Kentucky and Illinois. His first wife was Martha Casey and his second wife Mary Graves. No children by either wife. Elijah died in 1901 at Xenia, Illinois.

4. Danial Shirley: called "Uncle Dan" by the children of Samuel Perry Shirley, he was remembered because he lived to be 104 and the little town in Kentucky where he lived held a birthday celebration in his honor. He died in Kentucky.

Did Samuel and Phoebe have other children besides these? Did Samuel wed a Miss Vance before Phoebe or was Phoebe his only wife? Where in Kentucky did Dan reside and did he leave descendants? Who were the maternal grandparents of Belle Starr?—Mrs. Jo Rheta Shirley Helms, Route 2, Tecumseh, Oklahoma 74873

Rosebud Country

Dear Sir:

Your December 1968 TRUE WEST carried a story of Chris Colombe of the Rosebud country of South Dakota which is of great interest to me because, while no mention is made of the Storms family who resided there at that time, my father, the late John P. Storms, homesteaded in Tripp County with his brothers Peter, Hubert, and Leonard. Fifty years have passed since my parents moved away from the town of Gregory where I was born.

I was raised in the Cherokee Strip country of Oklahoma, drifting to the Far West and the sea at an early age. I have more than my rocking chair full of memories of America, its seas, its West and its treasures. Quite often your magazines mention someone I knew or met sometime and I can say "Charni" if he was Eskimo, "Howdy" if he was from Texas or "Buenos dias, Señor" if he was from Panama or the Spanish Main. So with that I will "Kayana, Pardner Amigos."—Bernard H. Storms, Box 112, Dewey, Arizona 86327

Billy With a Gun

Dear Editor:

I just finished reading TRUE WEST for December 1968 and the article written by that great bard from Tecolotenos northwest of Las Vegas, New Mexico—"Billy With a Gun." I knew Billy's brother and sister, Eli Green and Mrs. Rogers. Mrs. Rogers' son Alfred was a personal friend. Alfred passed away two years ago. He was very fluent with the Spanish language and could pray in Spanish "El Ave Maria" as good as a padre or swear in Spanish like a real Chihuahua militant. Some years ago I visited the place where Omar Barker says Billy and two other law enforcement officers were ambushed, killed and their bodies burned. Around the turn of the century there was an ode written and sung by the rancheros in the Trinidad, Colorado community that went something like this:

Al ano y cuatro meses,
Salio la muerte de los Grines (Greens)
Le culpan a Moises Freitas,
Tambien a Nestor Martinez.

These two men were in the Canyon City State Penitentiary for about twenty years and were sentenced on circumstantial evidence, having just missed the gallows.

I had two very close friends in Las Vegas, New Mexico, Mr. Byron T. Mills and Honorable Antonio Miguel Otero, Territorial Governor of New Mexico Territory from 1897 to 1906. Otero was the author of the book *My Forty Years in The Frontier*. If you ever read that historical book you will find that Mr. Barker has skipped none of the truth of what happened in those wild and woolly days.

Because of the many years I spent in New Mexico at the Highland University and the State College at Las Cruces I became acquainted with many of the early-day men of both nationalities, Anglos and Spanish. I have known Mr. Barker for the past fifty years as a gentleman beloved by all neighbors and strangers. He is a wonderful man who will live forever in the bosom of the great Commonwealth of New Mexico.—Jacobo Durán, 512 South 14th Street, Rocky Ford, Colorado 81067

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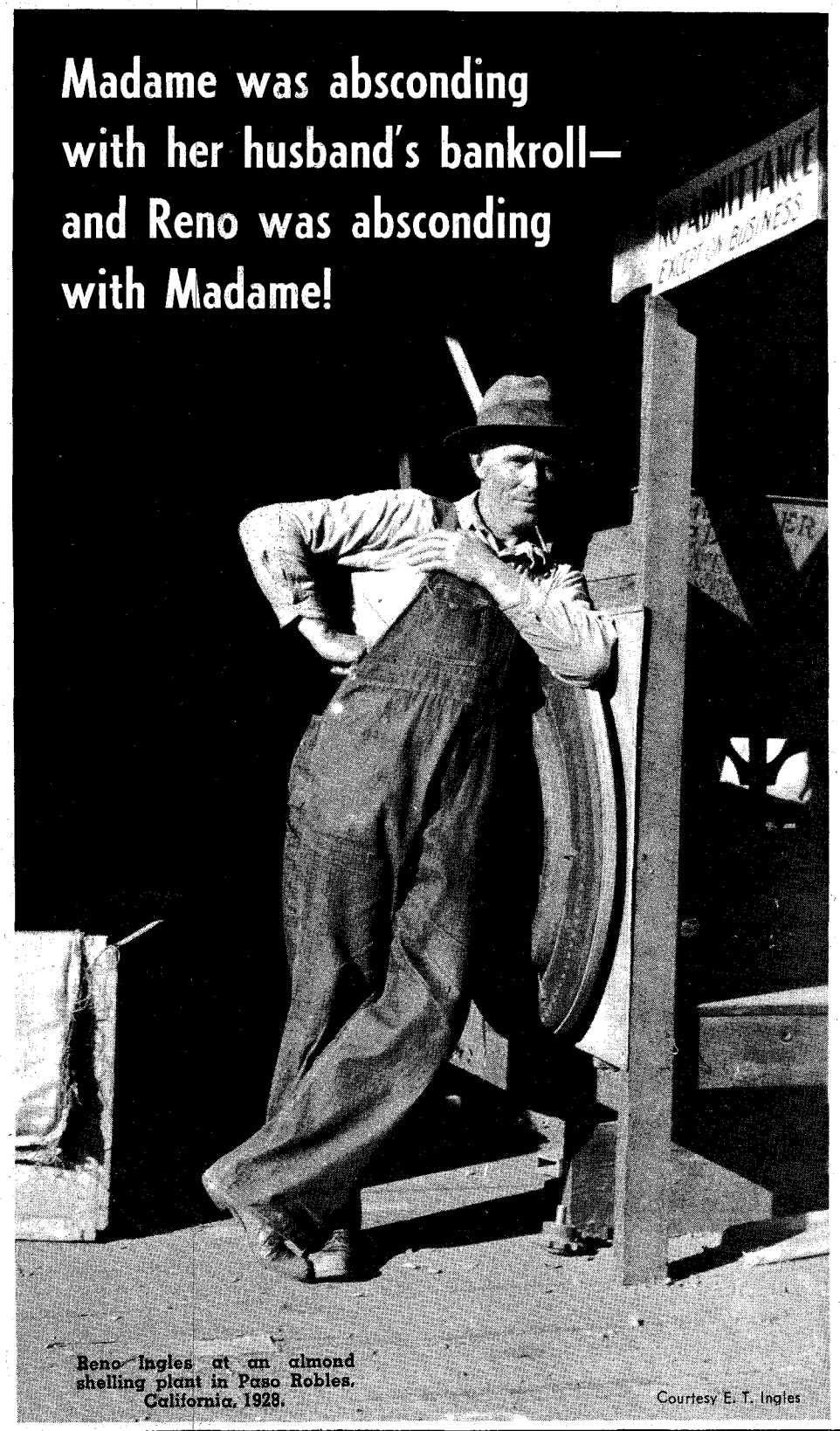
Madame was absconding with her husband's bankroll— and Reno was absconding with Madame!



Reno Ingles at an almond shelling plant in Paso Robles, California, 1928.

Courtesy E. T. Ingles

By RENO "DAD" INGLES
as told to
RICHARD SUMMERS

Photos Courtesy Author

THE FRENCH LADY'S

IT WASN'T the fact that Mrs. H. H. Kempton was both beautiful and a French lady, and had pretty bluish-purple and black hair that made the Kemptons a mystery. Just too many things peculiar about them. H. H. Kempton always carried a revolver in a holster on his hip, though why he'd need a revolver in a lumber camp beats me, except maybe when going to town for the payroll. And they always kept their bedroom door and the front door of their house, where they lived away from the main camp, both locked and barred, and this at a time when folks hardly ever bothered to lock their doors.

Most interesting was the steamer trunk belonging to Mrs. Kempton, which was kept in the bedroom. Anytime anybody wanted to cash a payroll check, she'd go into her bedroom and lock the door and open that steamer trunk and come out with a wad of bills a foot thick and count off whatever the check was for.

Sometimes you could hear the Kemptons fighting clear over to the bunkhouses, yelling at each other in loud voices and maybe the sound of a blow. Other times they was as mushy and cooing as any two lovebirds I ever seen. I had it figured out they was mostly just high strung, her being a French lady, as everybody knows the French is high strung and flighty, and him being a very heavy-drinking man with florid face, puffy around the eyes and them reddish, and always smelling of whiskey. He was the kind, though, that could keep drinking all day long and night too, and never seem to change much, never get really drunk except once or twice like that time he nearly killed a man.

Be that as it may, H. H. Kempton was one of the finest bosses I ever worked for, and the most generous, and usually good natured unless crossed. We'd be working along every day, maybe including Sundays, and all of a sudden he'd send word to the various jobs and operations or ride around hisself and say, "Let's lay off for four days. You boys go into town and have yourselves a time at my expense. And there's ten dollars 'waiting every boy that gets back here Tuesday afternoon in sober condition and ready to go to work Wednesday."

He'd do it, too. He'd ante up twenty-five, fifty dollars for every man and

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keep his word on the extra ten. And he'd see that a boy who was hurt was took care of as should be, and foot all the bills, and might even take care of the boy's family awhile, and pay all funeral expenses for them that was killed, and more than a few was killed.

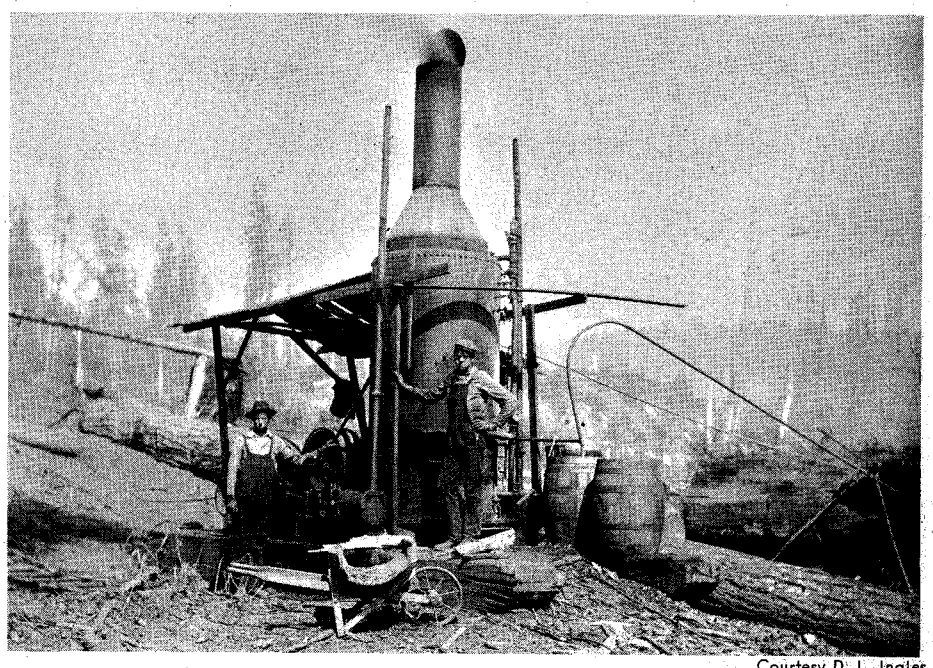
It paid off too, I guess. Very little turnover, very few drifters ever come to that place, or if they was accustomed to being short stakers they changed their habits working for Kempton. And we handled a lot of timber too. He was making money 'bout as fast as he could roll it in.

The two years, more or less, I spent working for the H. H. Kempton Lumber Company on the Blind Sloughs fifteen miles upriver from Astoria was two of the pleasantest years I ever passed. Astoria was a rough town where we bought most of our supplies, and I had occasion to go there many times in the Kempton launch which was a medium-large vessel with a cabin and towed a skiff for emergencies.

I was one of the few of the boys that could handle the launch and take care of the motor if something went wrong. So it was part of my regular duties to take her into Astoria about once a week and bring back mail and supplies for the commissary, and handle the bank business as well. (Bulk supplies come into the camp by wagon.) Those trips made a pleasant change from my regular duties of tree faller and general handyman-carpenter the first year, and foreman in charge of one of the lumber engines the second year. First year we used bulls and a skid road to yard the logs out of the forest; second year Kempton shifted over to a logging train as most of the bigger logging companies was then doing. This was about 1900, when I was twenty-two, twenty-three years old.

IT WAS really two camps, one thirteen miles back up the Blind Sloughs River in the timber, where we falled and yarded the logs to the river, and they floated downstream with our brand on them and was picked up below at the Columbia by the second camp and turned into railroad ties. At this time Mr. Kempton's main business was making ties for the new railroads being built in Oregon and Washington.

The lumber camp where I stayed consisted of three bunkhouses, large, shotgun style, containing fifty-sixty men altogether; the commissary where you could buy anything from chaw or pipe tobacco and matches to magazines and newspapers, to new razors, and where extra bulk stuff like flour and corn and halves of beef was stored; the mess hall and kitchen, a big building seating maybe seventy-five or eighty men and served by two-three cooks and helpers, loggers' wives; ten-twelve small houses for the married folks and their kids; and a bigger house where the Kemptons lived. The Kemptons' house was the only one with a regular roof over it. The rest was tent houses, even the big buildings—floor and walls of planks and wood, and canvas on top as a roof. They was built as temporary dwellings, without much foundation, so's the whole camp could be moved to a new site further up into the timber when the place got too far away from where the crews was working.



Courtesy D. L. Ingles

Donkey engine in the woods of Washington. The donkey, used for pulling and loading logs, was originally steam powered with a vertical boiler mounted on a log sled.

They was a fine spirit in that camp—partly because of so many married ladies about, living on the place, which was unusual in them days, and just the sight of them and the kids, and the talk and hollering keeps a man more contented, I guess. And you play more jokes and act up more with ladies around. Most men never do outgrow a part of theirselves that always remains a kid and a show-off.

Partly it was the high wages Kempton paid, three dollars a day, mighty high for then—plus the times he give the boys off to go to Astoria or Portland, mainly Astoria, and occasionally he'd give time off in berry season to go berry picking, which was just one big picnic.

I might be there yet if the camp was still there, married and with a family, if it had not been for my worst accident and for other events that happened to the Kemptons.

One of my duties when I went to Astoria was to buy whiskey for the boys—used to buy it by the barrel, less than two dollars the gallon at Jack Steiner's Bar when you bought it in that amount. And when I'd come back with it to camp Saturday night, why everybody went on a howling drunk which lasted through Sunday. This didn't happen every week, maybe about once a month on pay day. I remember one instance a preacher come to camp, said he was taking up a collection to build a new church at Burwell, a little town near there, to which all of us would be welcome to come. He said he hoped we would all contribute a little something. Well, loggers are a generous bunch if they ain't married—hard come but easy go. Every man around there, and at that time maybe over a hundred was working, contributed five-ten dollars, mostly in gold pieces. Didn't use so many bills then. Silver and gold. It wasn't three dollars or six dollars, but either five or ten.

So one of the boys took the notion and followed right after the preacher, taking up a collection for whiskey next time I or Kempton went to Astoria, or both of us, for he usually accompanied me. The boys was each taxed five dollars. So Sam come around last to the minister and held out the hat.

"Whiskey for the boys, Reverend?" he says.

The preacher says, "Why, certainly. It's a pleasure." And he puts a ten-dollar goldpiece from the sum he's collected into that hat for whiskey. That made him a right popular reverend.

I don't remember that many of the boys went to his church after it was finished, except the married ones and their wives and kids. The unmarried boys was too busy Sunday resting up from too much work or too much whiskey

TREASURE

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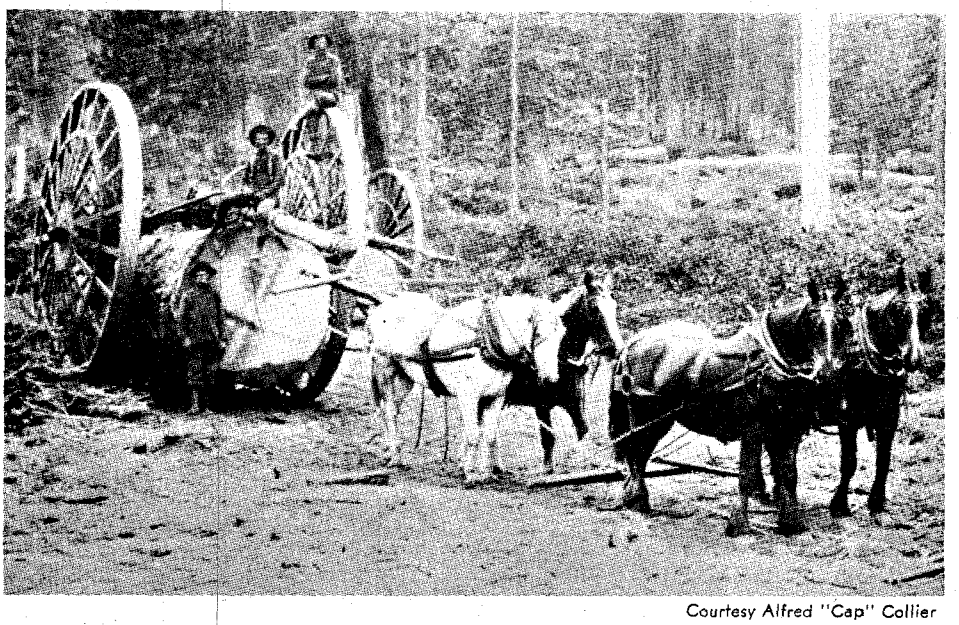

Courtesy Alfred "Cap" Collier

With the forward end of the log lifted on a twelve foot Stinger tongue arch, the rest of the log was left to drag behind on the ground.

or playing poker, or all of them combined.

ONE of the cooks was a plump, well set up, and rather pretty widow woman who had a good smile, so the boys like to rag her and watch her laugh and blush. We had a habit, anybody come new to camp dressed out in Sunday best suit and not work clothes ready to work, of shagging their britches. Didn't matter how expensive the suit.

I recollect the time, feller by the name of Jack Rhodes, hired out as a donkey driver—handle the donkey engine—come into the mess that evening decked out in his best suit, maybe a forty dollar suit, quite expensive.

This widow woman, Mrs. Anderson, says to Rhodes, "Young man, you better go change your suit right now. No telling what might happen. It's a rough camp."

Rhodes looks around at that bunch of men. He has those lines down from his nose to the ends of his mouth, and it downturned, showing him to be a feller who's pouty and could be mean. He says, "Nobody better shag my britches."

I didn't want no part of it, an expensive suit like that. I says, "Mrs. Anderson, you better be careful your turn don't come."

She laughs and blushes and says, "I don't worry none. Mine are already short enough."

About halfway through dessert, seven or eight of the boys gets up all at the same time, including Mr. Kempton, the boss, who ain't averse to taking part in all such. And when this new feller, Rhodes, come out, they waylaid him, removed the pants of his forty dollar suit while the rest of us looked on, him kicking and cursing, and shags 'em with a pair of scissors just below the knees as is customary with a logger's work pants, because his boots come up that far and he don't like the pants down into his boots crowding him.

Well, they let him up, but he ain't no sport about it. He goes after Kempton, fists swinging, and Kempton gets a little mad. Kempton says, "Cut it out, or I'll fire you right now, you s-o-b! Next payday I'll give you extra for the suit, you tell me what it cost. I'll pay for it like it was new, which it isn't."

"I'll get even with you, damn you," Rhodes answers.

Kempton says, "You want to calm down or get fired."

"I'll calm down," Rhodes says, "but that don't mean I won't get even."

Few days later I was working near the mess house, at the request of the boss, building a screened meat house. This widow woman, Mrs. Anderson, was hanging out some washing, among which pieces was a pair of underpants with about six inches of lace hanging down from the botton of them. Well, I looked at them and figured they needed shagging, so I sneaks over there and cuts off that lace with my pocket knife.

By and by Kempton comes around to look over and supervise my work, and I says, "Can't seem to find my ruler nowhere. You got one?" I already seen he had one in his hip pocket.

He give it to me, and I do a little measuring around and fiddling around till the chance comes when he was bending over looking at a joint with his back to me. I says, "Thanks for the loan of the ruler," and I pokes it back into his pocket along with Mrs. Anderson's lace.

Well, along come supper, and Mrs. Anderson looks at me close and says, "Somebody cut the lace off my clothes hanging on the line. You do that, Reno?"

I says, "Sure I done it. I seen they needed shagging so I shagged them."

About that time Mr. Kempton pulled out his handkerchief to wipe his mouth off. Felt kinda rough, so he looks at it. He looks across the table at me and says, "You s-o-b!" And he wads it up and pitches it to me, everybody roaring.

When things quieted down some, Mrs. Kempton says, "Reno, you got to buy Mrs. Anderson a new pair."

I said I'd be more'n delighted to do so provided I was allowed to do the measuring. Mrs. Anderson blushed and didn't mention again me buying her a new pair of underpants, but I did so anyhow on my next trip to Astoria.

UP TO THAT TIME I hadn't had any truck with married females, regarding them as private property, except to josh them along now and again, and maybe once in a while at a party or dance to grab a kiss at the appropriate moment when a few friendly exchanges seemed to be the order of the day.

I'd noticed, of course, that Mrs. Kempton had her eye on me now and then speculatively, but didn't figure it for much except maybe she was looking at my red hair. True, she'd once in a while see that I got a special from the kitchen, such as apple pie or a piece of cake, and once she give me a couple of chocolates from a box Mr. Kempton had brought her from Astoria. Some sort of mystery attached to them folks, but they was mighty fine people, generous and could take a joke, and was much fun at a party or dance. *Denny*, Mr. Kempton called her, which I figured was some sort of nickname.

I'd noticed too, that every month they got a big fat double-sealed envelope from St. Paul, Minnesota. That was the postmark, but there wasn't no return address on it, just "Mr. Harold Kempton, Astoria, Oregon." One time I noticed that the envelope had come part unsealed; then fumbling with all the letters and newspapers I pulled the seal a little more and seen what looked like the color of paper money. Well, human nature being what it is to a feller of twenty-two, I very careful run my finger down the rest of the seal and lifted out said contents. It was a batch of ten and twenty-dollar bills, totaling up a little over seven hundred dollars, a lot of money. So every month Mr. Kempton had been getting sums like this from St. Paul, with no letter explaining nor nothing. Just the money. Well, it wasn't none of my business. I put the money back, every penny of it, and sealed it up so's you'd never be able to notice it had been tampered with.

Some while after this, a feller rode up on a horse about dusk, from the direction of the road to Portland. It was after supper, but not dark yet, and the boys was horsing around, playing leap frog, throwing a ball, wrestling, while it was yet pleasant outside. This feller rode up to the Kempton house and dismounted, and Kempton came out. Kempton was a big man, over two hundred pounds and over six feet tall. Looked like he might of been a policeman at some time or other.

I was standing near at hand when this stranger dismounted. He was 'most as tall as Kempton but skinny, with a sly face.

"Hello, Hal," he says to Kempton.

The look on Kempton's face was anything but welcoming. "How are you, Jake?"

"You don't act glad to see me. Here I looked you up and rode all the way up

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here to pay a friendly visit."

"Sure, I'm glad to see an old friend," says Kempton.

"I brought you a box of bobbies—for old times' sake," says this stranger. "And a box of candy for the Mrs."

"That's very kind of you, Jake. Come on in and have a drink. Denny will be glad to see you." He called me over. "Reno, meet Mr. Miller. Old friend of mine from back East."

I shook hands with him. "Glad to make your acquaintance."

"Here, have a cigar." He opens the box and hands me one of them little cigars that they call bobbies, which is about the strongest cigar I ever smoked. (When I smoked it later, along with a couple of slugs of whiskey, it near made me sick.) "They used to be Hal's favorite brand."

Mr. Kempton says to me, "Do you mind bedding down Mr. Miller's horse? He'll stay the night."

"Not a bit," I says. So I leaves them and leads the horse down to the barns. By the time I curried the horse down, give him grain and some hay to keep him happy, it was past dark.

I had started out, and right at the door I bumped into Mrs. Kempton. It had begun to rain heavy, and she was wearing a slicker with a little pointed cap on top and looked very pretty. Kempton was around forty at this time. She was, I judge, about twenty-eight, thirty—good figure, everything to match the size of her five foot or so, one of the few women to use make-up and a little rouge and smoke once in a while in the privacy of her home. She was also not averse at times to drinking a bit of whiskey, which was taboo for most ladies. A little beer or maybe hard cider they would sometimes drink, but mostly nothing for fear of their reputations.

"Reno—"

"Yes, ma'am."

She leaned up against me and took hold of my sweater. It was sort of unexpected, and I pulled back. Didn't want nothing serious started.

"Would do me a big favor?"

"Sure. You betcher life. Anything you say."

"I'll—I'll pay you well."

She had that French accent, just a trace of it, that I won't try to make out in words. I was beginning to feel dizzy, maybe from the perfume she used, which most ladies didn't use in them days either.

"You don't need to pay me nothing."

"Well, I'll give you everything you ask."

"Must be a pretty big favor."

"It is. Can you run me down to Astoria in the launch—any time, day or night?"

I says, "Any time of day is fine. But it's mighty dangerous at night. Don't know the river well enough."

"But you'd try?"

"What about Mr. Kempton? Maybe if he give permission."

"You mustn't say a word to him. It's a secret just between us."

"Well, sure. I'll take a chance."

She was still pressing up against me, and I wasn't none too comfortable. Now she says, "Kiss me."

When she says that, she was talking my language. But not the kind of teasing smack I was accustomed to with married ladies, just to egg 'em on and make 'em giggle. This was a real kiss. Didn't have much clear thinking in my head after that. I kinda followed along behind her in the dark, wondering what was up, figuring it had something to do with Miller but not making him out nohow.

It was raining so hard she didn't see me following along. That's how I come up near the house and seen her bending over that steamer trunk for quite a spell, with the shade up and the lamp going, and me knowing the approximate location of the trunk on account of her letting me in one time to cash a check for me. Then the lamp went out. That's all I seen.

Next morning she acted like nothing had happened, just friendly and natural and not paying no special attention to me, giving more attention to Miller and her husband at breakfast, which she sometimes ate in the mess house, sometimes at home. Miller left about noon.

Just before supper that night she comes up to me and says, "Reno, will you just forget what I said last night? Everything's all right."

I says, "Sure will, Mrs. Kempton, if you say so. Least I won't say anything—but can't quite forget."

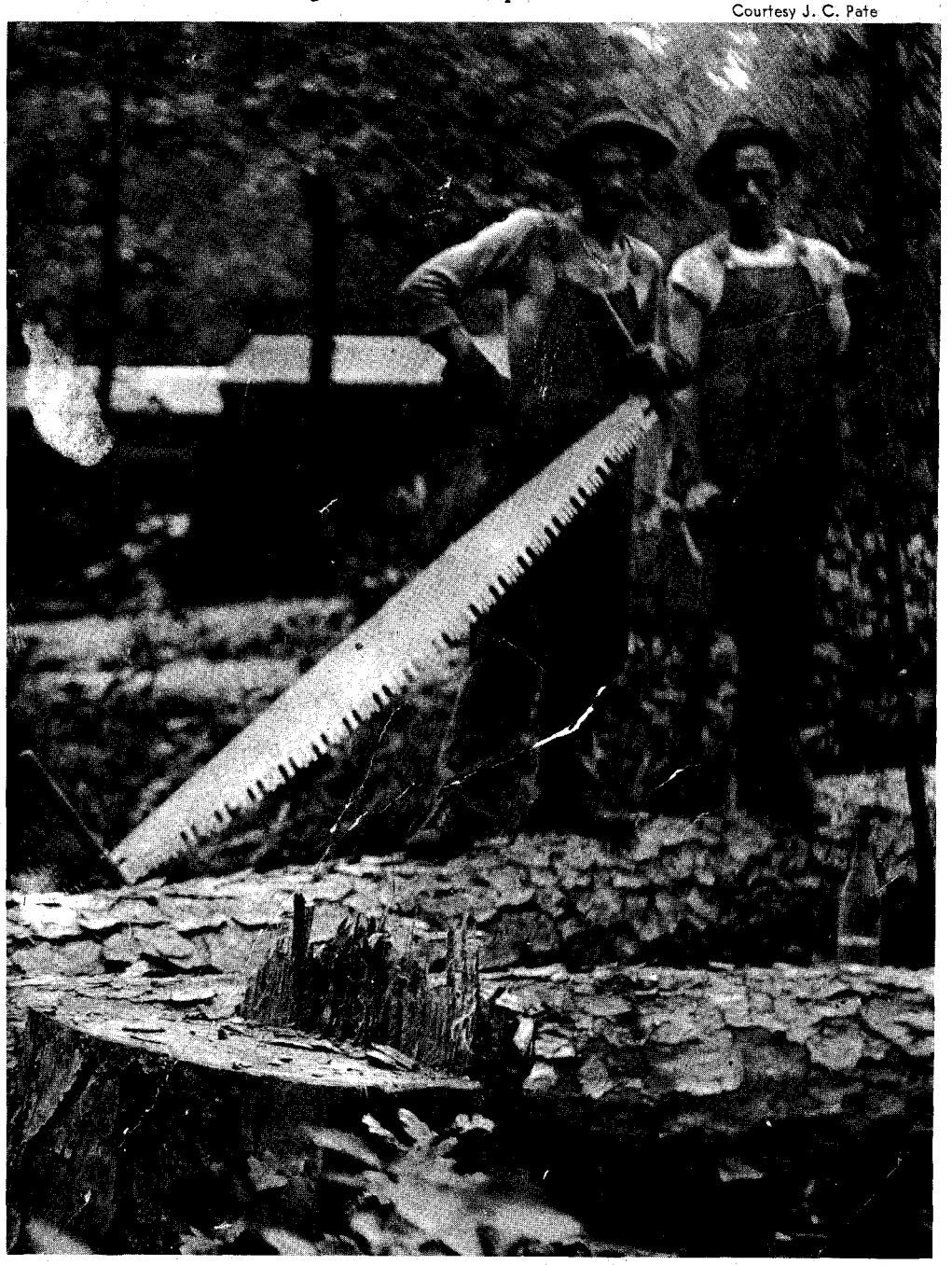
"You better forget," she says.

I wish I could of.

ONE OF THE worst fights I was ever a witness to, in fact the worst, the only real bad one, took place at Kempton's. After Miller had come and gone, Kempton took to drinking more and more, and his temper got mighty short, and he seemed jumpy. So did Denny Kempton.

Timber-fallers with a saw (probably a Simon or an Atkins) powered by all the elbow grease a man could put out.

Courtesy J. C. Pate



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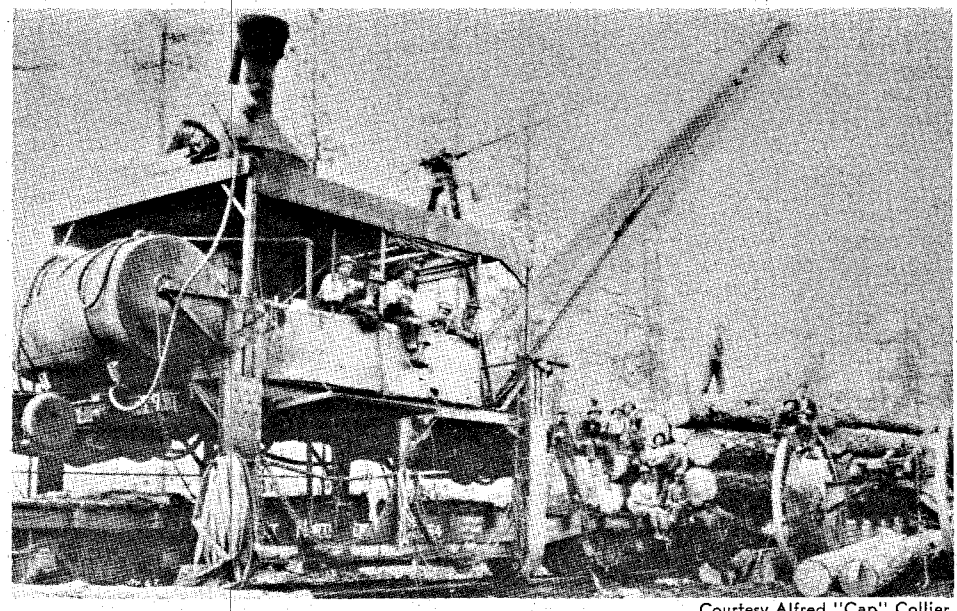

Courtesy Alfred "Cap" Collier

A McGiffert loader at Collier's Logging Museum, Klamath Falls, Oregon. It walks along the railroad tracks by itself, stomps its toes into the ballast, tucks its wheels up into its belly, pulls the log cars through its legs, slaps on a load of logs, and reaches back for another car.

A Sunday afternoon after I'd brought back whiskey from Astoria, Hal Kempton got into an argument with Jack Rhodes. It concerned them pants of his that had been shagged. They was behind the bunkhouse yelling at one another.

"I got the notion to take it out of your hide," says Jack Rhodes.

"I paid you for them, didn't I?" says Kempton. "But go ahead, try to take it out of my hide."

They was both drinking heavy, both very red of face. Jack Rhodes let go a haymaker from way down around his ankles, which you could see coming a mile off, and Kempton steps back. He uses short hard punches you can't see so easy—one two, one two, like that. Wouldn't be surprised he'd been in the prize ring as a young feller. He was a real expert.

Jack Rhodes kept throwing punches, most of which missed, but one or two landed. Then Hal Kempton stepped forward on his toes, and whango. That one sent Jack spilling to the ground. "That's all for you," Kempton says. "You get your time." He licks his knuckles to lick off the blood, he'd hit him that hard, then shakes his hand to see if any bones was broke.

Jack Rhodes got up on his hands and knees and sort of crawled off, then pulled to his feet and staggered into the bunkhouse. It should of ended there, but it didn't.

Next morning Jack comes out of the bunkhouse after the crews has gone to work and asks, "Where's Kempton?"

The boss was up on Slagle's side, helping along with the work, doing some tinkering with one of the donkeys. I was there too. And along came this Jack Rhodes, looking mad, several big swellings and bruises on his face. He hooks an arm to Kempton and whirls him around.

"I thought I fired you," Kempton says.

Rhodes didn't say nothing.

Kempton says, looking at him, "We both lost our tempers. You want to go back to work you can, but behave yourself."

Rhodes draws a gun and says sneering, "I come up here to shoot you. You know that, Kempton, I aims to shoot you!"

"That's all right," says Kempton. "If I done anything to you to deserve shooting for, go ahead and shoot me. But let's talk it over a bit, first."

Rhodes says, "You shagged my britches first night I was here. Made me mad."

Kempton says, "I paid you for them, didn't I? Damn it, Rhodes, what you want me to do, kiss your feet for it?"

Rhodes says, "You treated me like dirt."

Kempton says, "I treated you just the same as every other man in this outfit—same pay, same grub, same hours, same treatment."

They talked awhile longer, all the time Kempton edging a little closer and a little closer, none the rest of us moving, three of us besides Kempton there but all in front of Rhodes and that gun.

"You stay back there," Rhodes says. "I'm going to shoot you."

And Kempton says, "That's all right, boy, go ahead and shoot, and then we'll have a few more words, settle this thing. Or we'll make up right now and shake hands on it." Kempton shoved his hand forward.

What happened next I don't rightly know. That gun flew out of Rhodes' hands into the air. Some sort of a trick to it. That's why I figured that maybe Kempton must have been a cop, one time or other. Kempton picked the gun up and whammed it into a rock where it broke and exploded at the same time. And then he lit into Rhodes.

He knocked him down with about three meat-axe blows, and then begun jumping on him and near corked him to death. Busted three ribs, hurt a kidney, and scarred his face all up with them corks. If Rhodes is alive today he still bears them scars on his face, which was about ripped to pieces. Us boys around there figured Rhodes had it coming to him, but when we seen Kempton would kill him afore he quit, we pulled him off and held him, and he finally quieted down.

We tied Rhodes' wrists together behind him, then poured a bucket of water over his face and head, and that brung him to so he could walk. He was a mess. We led him outa there and down to the camp groaning and staggering, and Slagle and me and Kempton took him in to Astoria, where they put him in the hospital first, finally give him a trial, and he got five years in the penitentiary for assault with a deadly weapon.

IT WAS DARK, lights out, the night Mrs. Kempton come down to the bunkhouse to roust me out. It was about nine, ten months after the accident. She knocked on the door several times before one of the boys roused up to answer it.

I heard her say, "Is Reno there?" Recognized her voice right off.

I sings out, "Be right with you, Mrs. Kempton." I dressed fast, wasn't more two, three minutes 'til I was out there with her in the dark, a moonless cloudy night. I knowed it was something mighty important to bring her there alone at that hour of the night.

"Don't talk loud, Reno," she whispers. "I'm here because I could trust you. And you're strong and honest—and I like you. Will you carry out that promise you made so long ago?"

Well, I didn't like to get into trouble with Kempton, who had been so good to me, so I says, "Does the boss know about this?"

She says, kind of short, "You are not to ask questions. Will you do it, please?"

So I says, still whispering, "Damned if I won't, Mrs. Kempton."

But she don't go direct to the river. She leads me through a drizzling night, back up to her house, not saying anything. She don't go to the front door, however. Lights are on inside, and we can hear men's voices. She leads me around back and directly underneath the window of her bedroom, and there lays the steamer trunk, which she has somehow heaved out of that window, maybe climbed out the window herself, leaving the door locked. She stops and holding onto my arm whispers in my ear, "Can you carry it, Reno?"

I says, "Sure, I can carry it."

But that trunk was deceptive. It was so heavy it took most of my strength to lift it. "You got a body in here?" I asks.

"Sh."

Well, I can't carry that trunk but I can drag it over the ground, her running about helping out but not really helping much. It is about two city blocks to the river and the pier, and a right long haul by the time I get that trunk down there. It was quite a chore lugging the trunk down from the pier into the skiff, almost lost it twice, but I managed and paddled it out to the launch and heaved it on board. Then I came back for her and got her boarded, tied the skiff to the

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Courtesy Oregon Historical Society

Early photo of Astoria, Oregon.

rear and heaved up the anchor. I come back to the cabin to start the engine.

"Don't you think we'd better drift awhile?" she says. "At least until we're out of sight of the camp?"

"Out of earshot, you mean," I says. "They couldn't see a damn thing, not tonight."

So we sits side by side on the cabin and let the launch drift down midstream with the current, a slow current, and I handle her from the forward control. Mighty chummy setting there with that pretty little woman, and I am in no hurry to start that motor. She has her hand pressing on my arm and is very nervous and high-keyed.

"Reno," she says at last, "kiss me, please."

So I kissed her with the usual enthusiasm I have always shown.

She says, "Not that way, Reno." And she tries to show me how kissing should be done in the best circles.

"You are good to me," she says. "You are so good to me."

"What's Mr. Kempton going to say about this?"

"He won't say anything, Reno. He will not be surprised, I promise you."

We are still drifting because I like it that way. And she don't seem to be in a hurry to get underway. You can sort of feel when somebody's got something on their mind, but can't make theirself say it.

Finally she remarks, "That money in the steamer trunk is all mine, Reno. Every penny of it."

I says, "So it ain't a body?" I knowed all along it was the gold and silver she kept there, of course, along with her clothes. I was only kidding.

She don't pay any attention because she's got this other on her mind. "Reno, will you run away with me?"

That just about knocked me off the cabin and into the river. I did scrape a bar carelesslike by not staying in the current in midstream. "How you mean?"

"Go with me. At Astoria I'm getting a ticket for San Francisco or San Diego. I need you along."

That lady could of asked me to jump in the river, and I'd a-done it. Of course, I didn't know how she meant that "run away with her," and didn't like to ask, so I didn't. I'd find out soon enough. Maybe she just needed somebody to look after her and that trunk, in which case I was willing.

I told her she could bet her life I'd do it.

WITH THAT SETTLED, it was time to start up the motor. I got back there and worked and worked on the fly wheel and the magneto to get her going, but she just wouldn't kick over. I kept priming her and working, couldn't get her going, worked myself into a sweat in spite of the rain and the cold. I struck a match to try to figure out what had gone wrong. That did it. Must have been overflow from the primer. The boat caught fire.

I pulled the skiff in close, helped her into it, dropped the line off the burning launch. Then I picked up a baking pan and begun to throw water onto the fire. At first the water just seemed to spread it.

I heard Mrs. Kempton call out to me, "Don't forget the trunk!"

What could I do with that trunk with all her clothes and money? Dump it overboard and never find it again? Leave it here and let it get burned up along with everything else? The fire was already singeing it. I had to gamble getting that fire out with the baking pan, also gamble on an explosion that would blow me to kingdom come. So I keeps working as fast as I can, finally managed to douse the fire. Next I steered the launch toward the shore and beached it, doused some more water on the motor to cool it off, and examined it, risking another match to do so. The gas line had melted out and I had no way to fix it.

Mrs. Kempton drove the skiff up beside the launch.

"You got it out, Reno. I'm so grateful."

I says, "Don't do us much good though. Gas line is burned out and no way to fix it."

"No way possible?"

(Continued on page 44)

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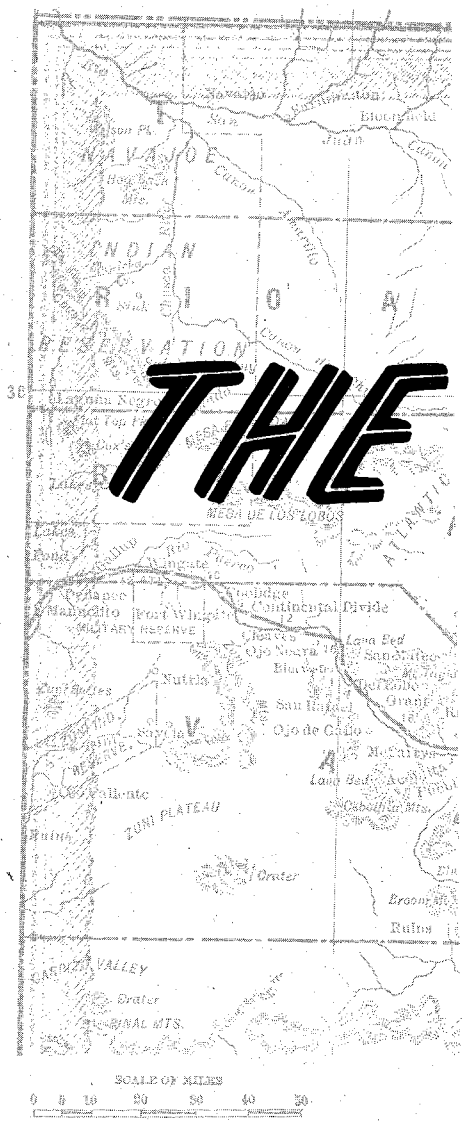
The chronicle of a young volunteer in New Mexico's most dangerous era. When his outfit wasn't skirting the Apaches it was

SCOUTING THE

By MILTON W. CALLON

Unidentified group of Utes. Photo by Nast, Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection



WILLIAM Kroenig was born in Westphalia, Germany on February 3, 1828. Although he received his early training in the field of mechandising, in his youth William Kroenig was a foot-loose wanderer. He left his home at an early age and spent three years in Holland. A short sojourn in Antwerp, Belgium followed and before deciding that his future was in America, he spent six months in Bremen, Germany.

In 1847, William Kroenig, with a cash capital of two hundred dollars, took passage on the first return trip of the steamer *Washington* for New York City. With no friends or acquaintances in New York he was soon on his way to Wisconsin and the life of a farmer. This proved to be disastrous and he left the Badger State for St. Louis and thence to New Orleans. It was there that Kroenig learned the art of cigar making while he supplemented his income as a bookkeeper.

When the yellow fever struck New Orleans he went up river to Williamsport and subsequently to Bayou, Texas where he found employment as a dry goods

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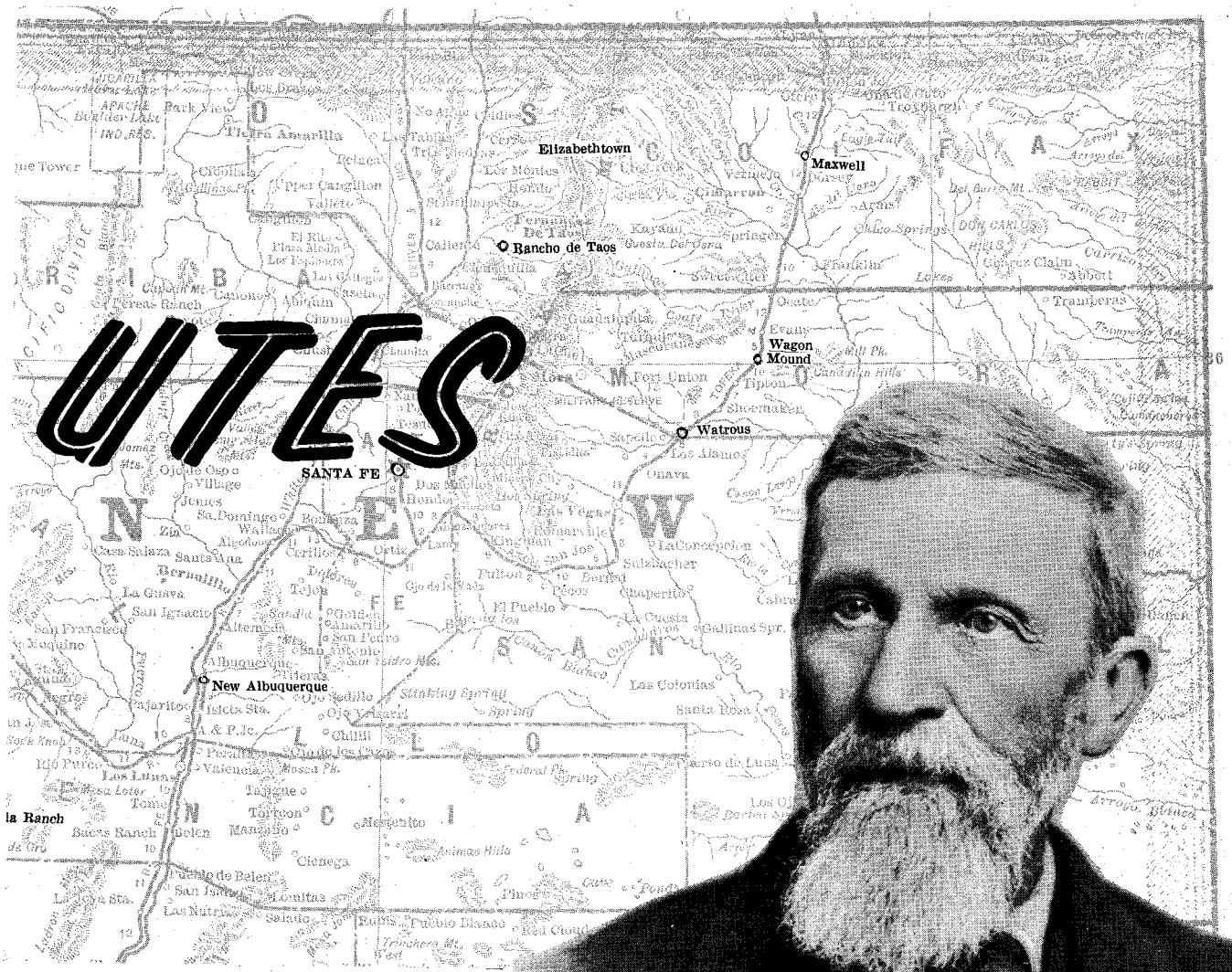

Above, an 1884 map of New Mexico, territory familiar to William Kroenig (right).

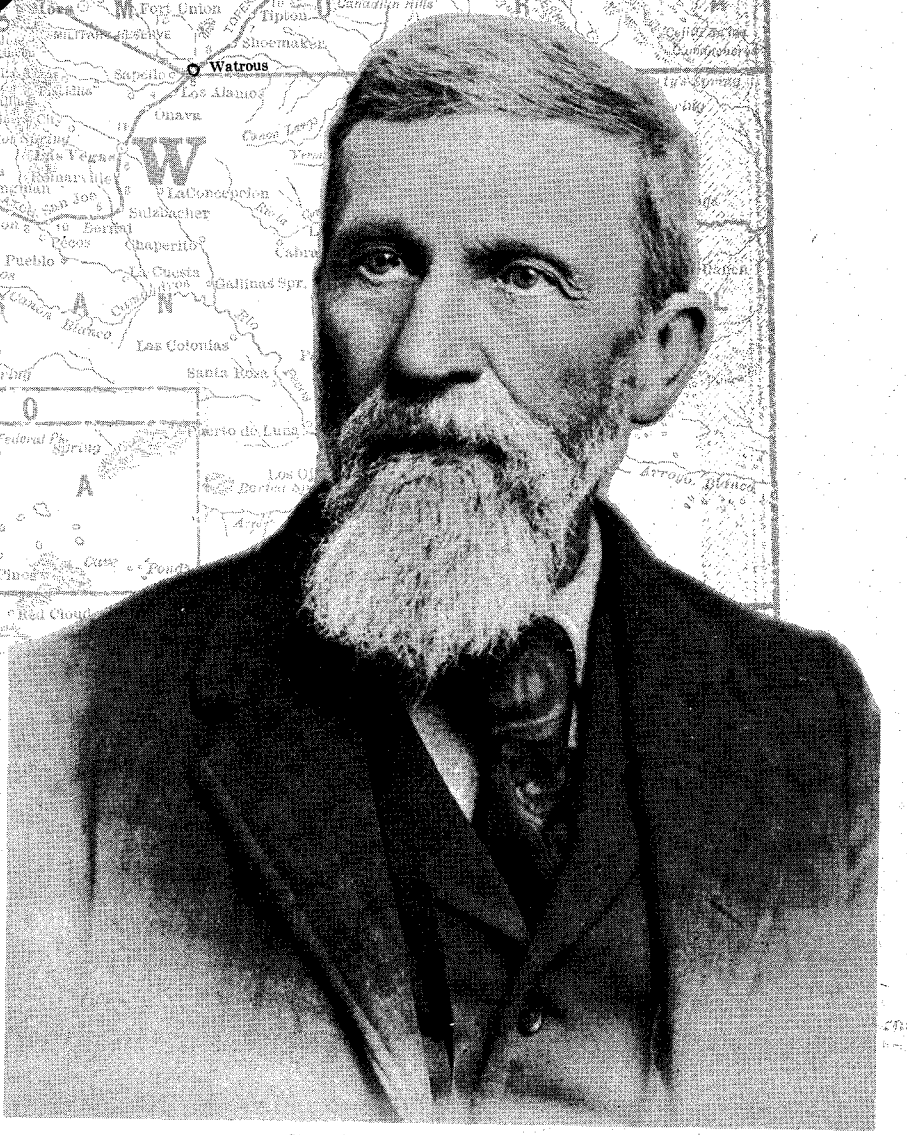

Photo by Furlong, Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection

salesman. By this time he was certain that he was not on the right road to the destiny he had dreamed of and he returned to New York by way of Louisville, Cincinnati and Philadelphia. He attempted to renew his vision of prosperity from the dingy and dubious atmosphere of an "underground" grocery on a wage of six dollars a month. He was discharged from this job when he refused to pass counterfeit money. Discouragement possessed him and he retraced his steps to Wisconsin. It was this period in his life which he often recalled in later years. He was never to forget that he walked to St. Paul, Minnesota only to return to Milwaukee when opportunities continued to evade him.

Upon his return to the Wisconsin city he became acquainted with a doctor who was also trained in the field of geology. The doctor was making plans to accompany General John C. Fremont on his 1849 expedition to California. News of the gold strike redoubled their interest in the trip and William Kroenig decided to become one of the party. However, the boat on which they took passage ran aground on a sand bar and the delay caused them to miss the departure of the Fremont party. From this date William Kroenig recorded the events of the following two exciting years of his life, excerpts from which are cited below. . .

"ON the Fourth of July, 1849, I left Independence, then the great outfitting emporium for the West, jointly with a young doctor, heartily glad to get away from this Cholera-struck town. We had made arrangements with a proprietor of a train to board us and haul our luggage to Santa Fe. The wagons were heavily laden. Our daily marches were regulated by the different watering places on the road. . . .

"It was the intention of the Doctor and myself to go by the way of Albuquerque, right on to California. But fate had decided it otherwise. Before I left Independence I had by advice of a friend brought a check of $100 on a mercantile house in Santa Fe, but as the drawer, a Mr. Cartwright, had died with

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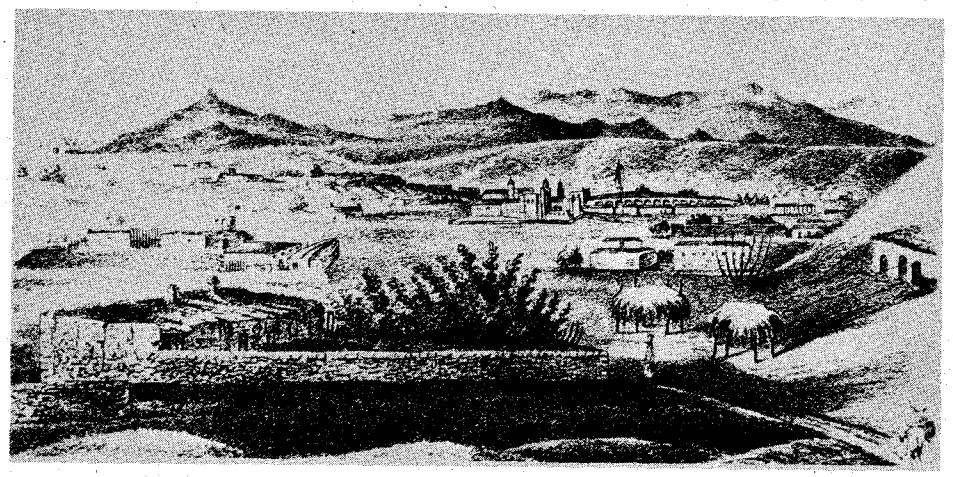


Courtesy Museum of New Mexico

Lithograph of Santa Fe and vicinity looking east, 1849, the year Kroenig and a young doctor friend stopped there on their way to California.

Cholera after my departure, the business had gone into the hands of the administrator who by mail had stopped payment of the check till the affairs of the Administrator could be settled.

"Young men were plentiful, many having [been] stranded in Santa Fe while on their way to California. There was nothing left to do but go to work at my trade as a cigar-maker which I learned in New Orleans. Fortunately I had brought a few hundred pounds of tobacco in speculation but I had not enough money left to pay the freight. The owner of the train left the tobacco in the hands of a merchant where I could get it in small quantities by paying the freight as I needed it.

"Boarding at a hotel was beyond my pecuniary reach and I rented a room owned by two young Germans, Viereck and Schlesinger, and kept house. My horse I put on herd with a Mexican. But when he presented the bill at the rate of one dollar a day, I told my new acquaintance, Viereck, to sell it on the trails, realizing only $13 for it—the herd bill being $8 which left me $5.00 net.

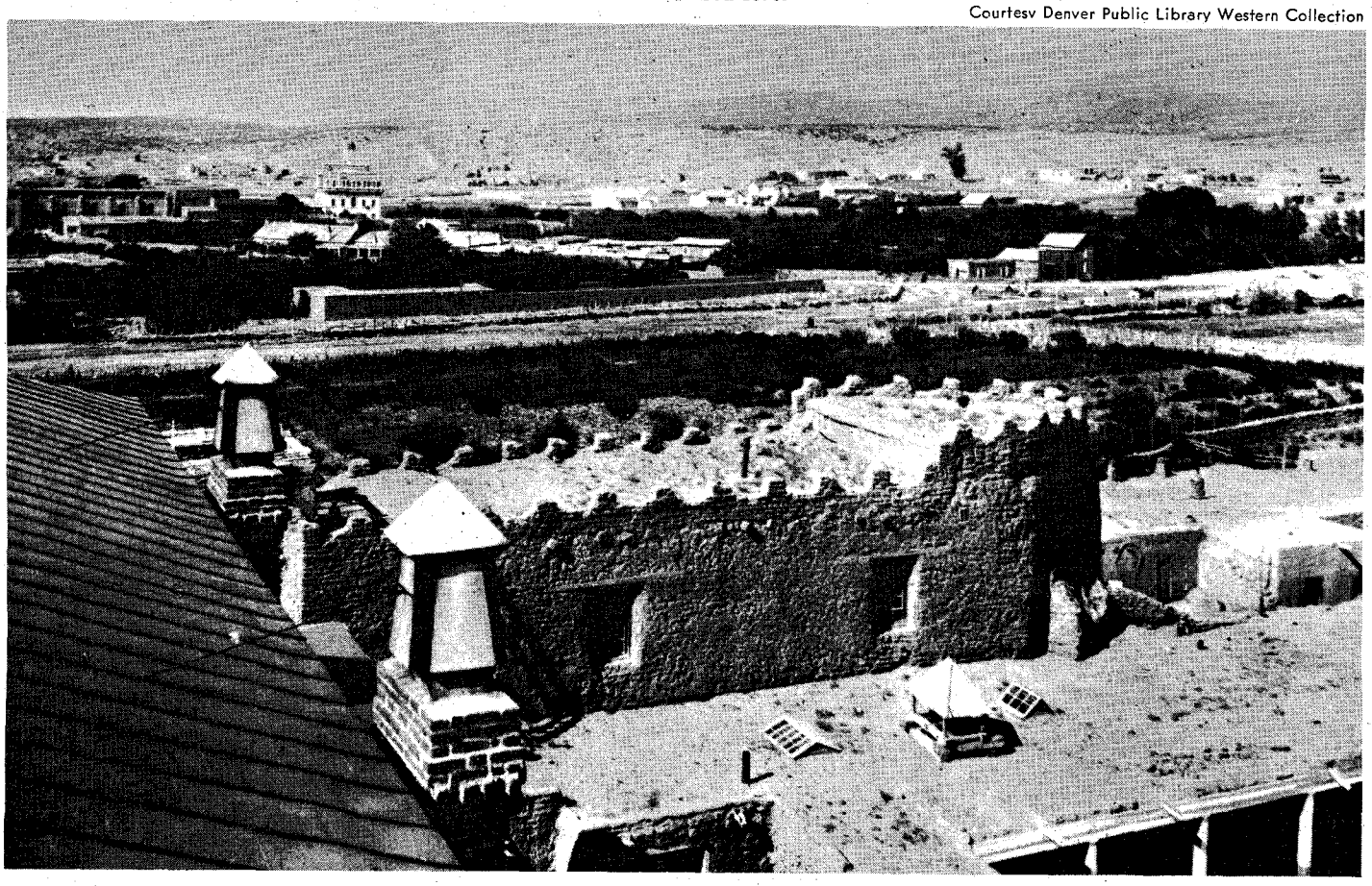
"This German, Viereck, was a Berliner, brother of the celebrated actress of the same name. Never had a dollar but was rich in resources, always in the best of humor, and delighted in playing us all kinds of pranks, disarming us on all occasions by his ingenious exercises. He was a professional scenery painter. So after taking a look at the lay of the land he concluded to start a barber shop. Had a barber chair made by an American carpenter, a very tall and assumptive man. Rented an extra room from a very old Mexican woman; ran into debt to a German physician and probably borrowed a little money. His business flourished but the monte dealers got it all and some of my cigar money which he peddled out in the evenings to the different saloons. Viereck's life was not by any means an agreeable one. Every morning he had three calls for money, the carpenter, the Doctor, and the Mexican woman besides ones from others.

"MY BUSINESS did not promise a brilliant future and Schlesinger not having any employment was willing to go anywhere. A call from Taos for volunteers gave us the desired opportunity to better our fortunes. Colonel Beall [Benjamin L.], who was on a visit at Santa Fe and with whom I accidentally became acquainted, encouraged us to enlist and so we made the necessary preparations to leave on the morrow. Viereck sold the barber chair, bought a large cartoon and went industriously to work on a crayon picture representing himself in the background with his hands spread out and stuck to his nose in front of his three creditors, easily recognized by everyone who knew them.

"Early in the morning my companions left Santa Fe leaving me behind to watch from an opposite house as Viereck

Santa Fe, circa 1870.

Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection



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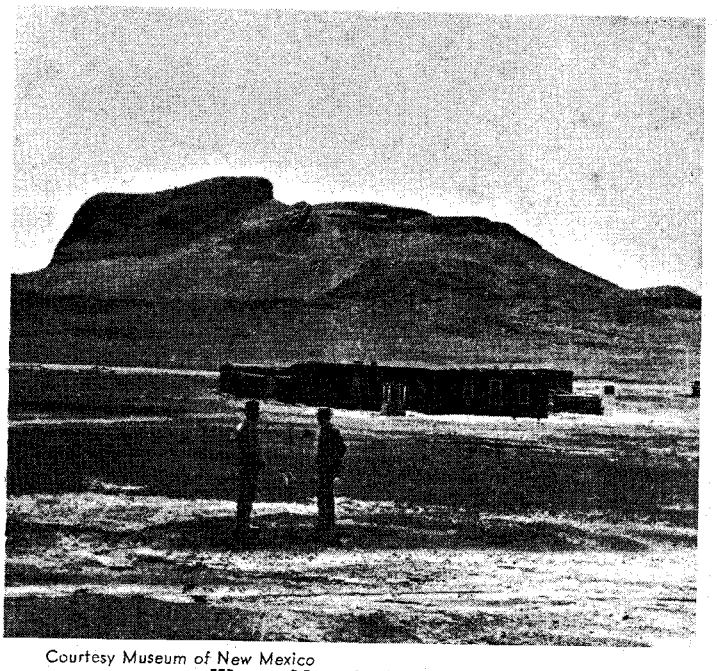


Courtesy Museum of New Mexico
Wagon Mound, about 1870.

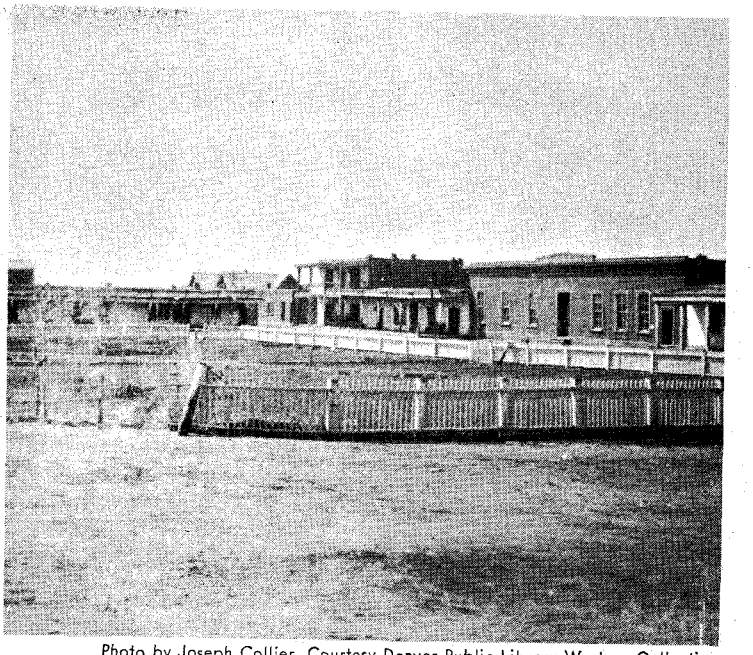


Photo by Joseph Collier, Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection
Rancho de Taos

said, 'To see the effect of the picture.' I did not have long to wait when the Carpenter came knocking at the door. When no answer came from within he went to the window and when he saw the picture his anger carried him away to a fearful lot of abuse in English to the empty room. . . . Next came the German doctor who nearly went through the same movements, with the difference that it was in German. Next came the landlady but which I could not understand. I handed her the key and she spoke to me in a very excited manner. I suppose she intended some of her abuse for me.

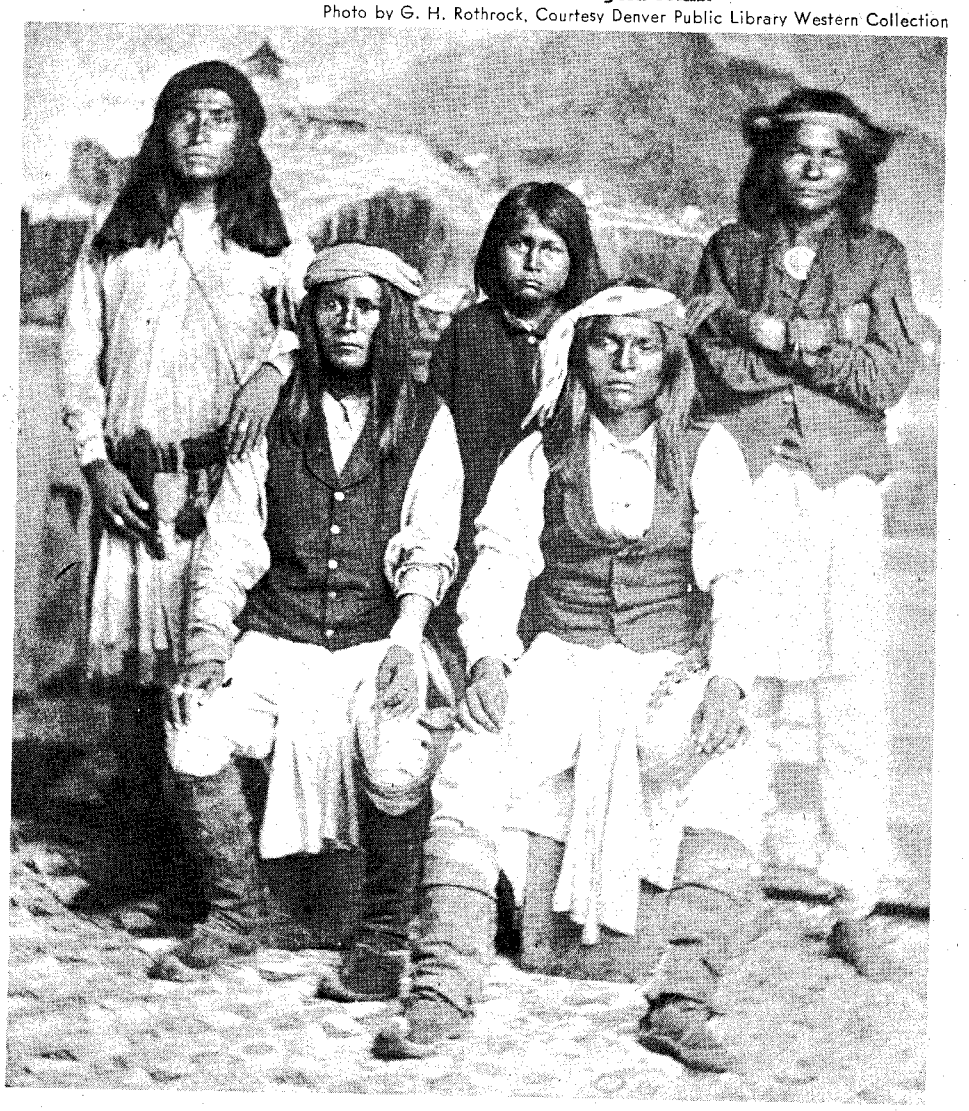
"My friends were waiting for me a few miles from Santa Fe under a piñon tree and after describing the effects of the picture to the greatest merriment of Viereck, we wended our way towards Taos. Soon after, Colonel Beall passed us with an escort of 10 or 12 dragoons and invited us to mount behind his men which offer we gratefully accepted. From then to Santa Cruz de la Cañada, a distance of sixteen miles or more, there was hardly a break in the gallop and to ride behind a saddle of that day with a horse in front and one behind was far from being a pleasure. We begged [them] to put us down but all in vain till we finally landed at the Cañada where a couple of young Mexican merchants offered us their hospitality which we gladly accepted.

"NEXT DAY we went to Rio Arriba to [see] Pandeleon Archuleta, to whom a Mr. Mink, then residing in Santa Fe and with whose brother I had been in school, had given me a letter of recommendation. Mr. Archuleta received us very kindly and gave us for supper chili con carne (meat with red pepper) and atole (mush made out of blue parched corn).

"Our ride behind the dragoons had made us very sore and Viereck proposed that I should have mules to go to Taos on. But my purse, the only one which was not quite empty, was not sufficient to have three mules so we hired two with the understanding to change about. The mules were to be turned over to a man in Taos. Viereck and Schlesinger by drawing for it had the first ride to a certain point from our starting place. When I got there they had left. I kept on but my hopes to overtake them were not realized. I went that day as far as Embudo where a French-Canadian by the name of Chalifount

These Apache renegades probably looked much like the ones with whom Kroenig traded meal and calico for stolen gold coins.

Photo by G. H. Rothrock, Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection



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Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection

Kroenig's house built near Watrous and into which he moved from old Fort Barclay.

[Jean-Baptiste Chalifoux] gave me board and lodging and refused pay, which was very fortunate as I had only $25.00 left.

"I found my two companions in Taos in the only hotel, kept by Judge [Carlos] Beaubien, with as much confidence as if they had fortunes at their disposal and [I] was intended by them to share their comforts but not having the cheek, I declined. I bought a loaf of bread and slept in a straw pile.

"Next day we enlisted for two months and by the request of Colonel Beall I was made Orderly Sergeant of the Company. As there was not a single soldier who could write English, I had, in addition, to perform the duties of the Commissary Sergeant in receiving and distributing the rations.

"A small detachment under one Lieutenant was sent to Rayado and the bulk of the company to Rio Colorado to protect this settlement from the invasion of Utes and Apaches. . . .

"By the last of the month I was again in Taos with a lot of pack mules to draw rations when the news of the [Dr. J. M.] White party massacre reached us and we were at once ordered to get ready for a campaign against the depredating Utes and Apaches. A dispatch sent to Rio Colorado brought the Company in that same night."

The incident of the White massacre has been a confusing bit of history in New Mexico chronicles and no one has as yet recorded the affair with complete accuracy. Kroenig participated in the search for Mrs. White, and her body was found but there was no trace of the child.

Kroenig-Maxwell ditch where it crosses the Sangre de Cristos at the summit of old Red River Pass.

Courtesy C. M. Montgomery, Las Vegas, New Mexico

"TOWARDS the latter part of January [1850], I went to Taos with a fine black-tailed doe on my horse and sold it for $4.00. While making some small purchases I met Colonel Beall who had been very friendly to me on all occasions. He inquired [about] what I was doing and how much I made a month. I told him that I had killed four doe in that month which I sold at $4.00 [each] but that my hunting grounds were nearly thirty miles away and that the snow was very deep.

" 'Come to my office,' he said, 'I have something better for you and the pay will be $5.00 a day.'

" 'For $5.00 a day I will go anywhere—even to H - - - !'

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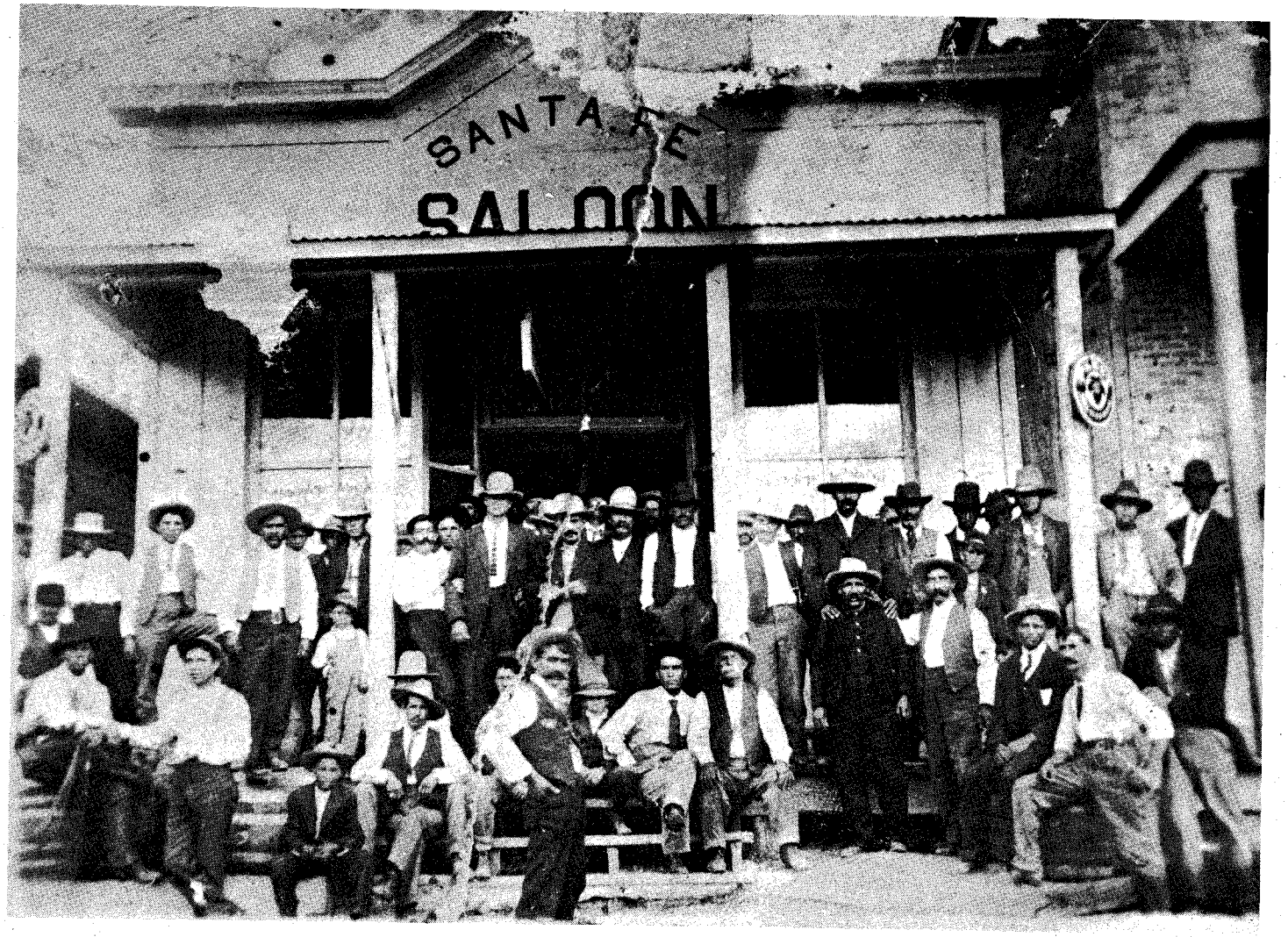


Courtesy Museum of New Mexico

Patrons pose in front of the Santa Fe Saloon at Wagon Mound.

" 'Don't be too fast,' he remarked. 'The place I intend to send you may be as hot as the place you alluded to.'

"At his office he told me that the Department [had] ordered him to make every possible effort to find the baby child of Mrs. White which was supposed to be yet alive in the hands of the Indians. My instructions were to go to the tribes, tell them to come and make peace and find out all about the child. I was to assure them that they would be properly treated. Rumors had come to the Colonel's ears that the child was with the tribe and alive and that they were willing to make peace. However, there was nothing certain about these rumors.

"I made my preparations at once, coaxed Schlesinger to go along by paying him a dollar a day and got a loan of two good horses from J. H. Mink, a brother of a school comrade. One of the animals was a fine Kentucky mare, well acclimated, claimed by Schlesinger as a riding nag for the trip. The other, a good but rather vicious California chestnut sorrel, fell to my share. I mounted the horse and was thrown three times in succession but as the snow was deep I did not get hurt and mounted the fourth time and stuck in spite of all the horse could do.

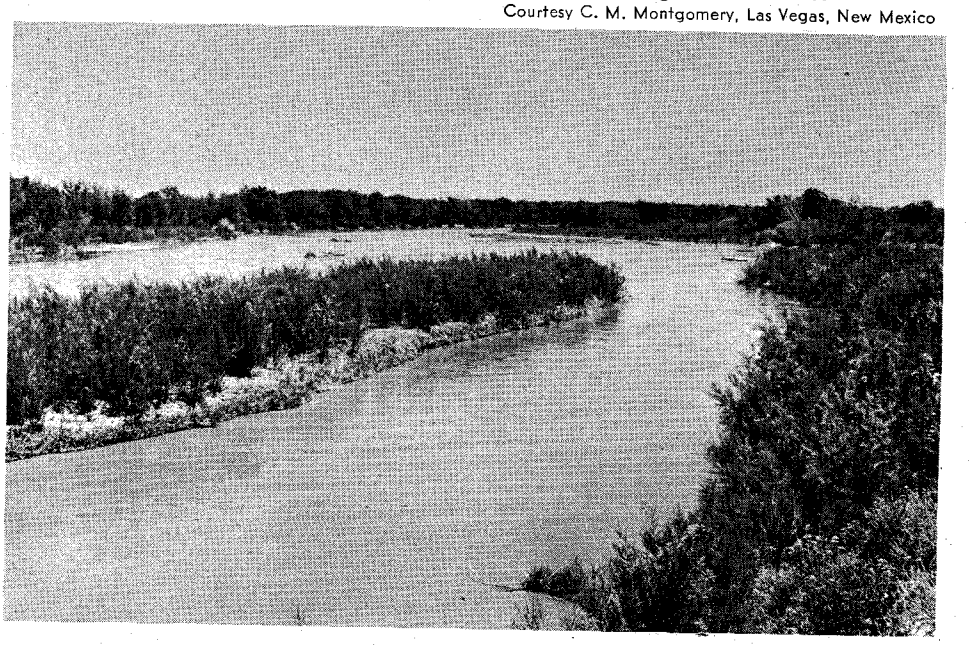
"The first day brought us to Rio Colorado, a small settlement and the last on the frontier, 30 miles north of Taos where I stopped with Lopare Loparet [Laforet]. When he heard of my work he said only a greenhorn or a man demented would undertake such a trip. He avowed it would result in my death, and if I should escape the Utes I would surely fall into the hands of the Apaches.

"I told him that the Utes had sent a message to Colonel Beall proposing to make peace which he denounced as an absurdity, as if such had been the case, he certainly would have been aware of it. When he saw that I was determined to go he gave me some valuable advice. He

(Continued on page 52)

Mouth of the Huerfano River where it empties into the Arkansas River and where Kroenig first took up forty acres of land to produce vegetables in 1857.

Courtesy C. M. Montgomery, Las Vegas, New Mexico



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ONE OF THE FEW historical "firsts" Russia has never disputed is that Spain introduced the modern horse to North America. Nevertheless, this is an honor she might validly claim.

Reports concerning a curious breed of curly-haired horse have occurred ever since the first trappers and cattlemen arrived in Canada, Nevada and Wyoming. Described as "fur covered" and by some early explorers as "buffalo horses," the coats of these animals are as soft as silk and as curly as the hair of a poodle. In other ways, also, they differ from the mustang which descended from stock introduced to the Americas by Spanish *Conquistadores.*

The mares of these curly horses are heavy milkers, each giving from four to six gallons a day. Their hoofs are small, hard and black, even when the animals' legs are white, and they are short of back with good shoulder, leg and head conformation suggestive of the blood that created the Arabian horse in the dim beginnings of horse breeding.

No matter with what stock this horse is bred, it has proven so fantastically potent that the mare always transmits her own special characteristics. Further, this rare breed's stamina to survive under the most severe circumstances exceeds that of all other wild horses. For these reasons, had the strange breed arrived here in any appreciable number, it would have overrun the Northwest. The fact that it was introduced in an exceedingly small number.

THERE is only one known breed which possesses identical characteristics to it. That is the Bashkir horse, native to Russian's Bashkir state on the east slope of the Urals and to certain regions around the Black Sea and North China. There, the hardy nomads of the Russian steppes and Mongolia have used the horse for centuries both for transportation and as a dairy supply. The mare's milk, fermented, produces koumiss, a dietary mainstay of these Bashkir nomads who were described by a tenth-century writer as a warlike race of the Mongol type. Much later, our own early Navajo Indians were described in similar terms.

No horses of this breed have been imported to America during historic times. So when did they arrive? And from where did they come?

According to the Soviet Agricultural Department, these horses have been bred for untold centuries by settlers in the State of Bashkir, but whether or not the wild stock originated there or in northern China where the breed is prized today as a saddle horse for the wealthy, is unknown. Nevertheless, it presents a fascinating area for speculation. If the true root of the Bashkir stock could be determined, it might reveal the mysterious origin of the Navajo and Apache Indians, both tribes of the Athabascan linguistic tidbits of Mongolian history, however, which lend serious doubts to this speculation.

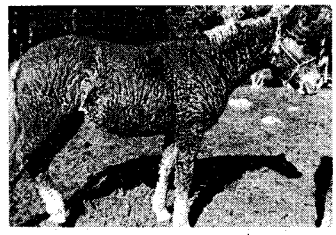
Ghengis Khan was followed by Batu Khan, who organized the Golden Horde expedition into the Volga country which lies within the Bashkir range. It was very probably he who introduced the curly horse to Russia or, if it were native there, he adopted it at that time for his troops. The powerful Khan dynasty finally fell under Kublai Khan in 1368, when the Mongols were expelled from China and forced to wander far afield to seek pastures for their horses. By 1500 no part of the dynasty existed and its people were stragglers everywhere.

Possibly during this descendency, a nomadic tribe found its way to North America by moving a few horses across the Bering Strait, as their illustrious ancestors under the great Ghengis Khan had moved an army of horses across the frozen Danube in order to conquer Russia and Europe. By this time, though, a century-and-a-half of disorganized wandering had wiped out all vestiges of metal-tipped spears and other advanced gear provided by the once-great warring Khans. So to the New World these nomads brought nothing more than a few head of horses to supply milk for their koumiss.

Where some of these Mongolian sojourners might have perished, a hardy mare or two, accompanied by a stallion,

We hate to suggest such a thing, but

DID RUSSIA INTRODUCE



that it didn't—that only occasionally was it found running with a herd of mustangs descended from Spanish horses which had been captured and brought north by Indians—and that it has been found wild in Canada, Idaho, Washington, Colorado, Wyoming, Oregon, Montana and Nevada, but never in California, Utah, nor in any southwestern state, provides fairly conclusive evidence that the breed was originally introduced into the far northwestern boundaries of this continent—which the Spanish did not reach—and family which is related to the Mongolian and which is believed to have moved south from the Canadian North about 700 years ago.

In *The Mysterious West*, a book I coauthored with Brad Williams, we suggested that Ghengis Khan might have had a few troops exploring his east while he overran Europe to his west, at which time the Mongolians might have lost a few potent members of their dairy supply by the animals' escaping over the ice of narrow Bering Strait. There are other might have escaped to run wild and breed and eventually fall in with the herds of Spanish horses which later moved up from the Southwest.

A FEW curly horse descendents from wild stock still exist. On the Three Bar Ranch in central Nevada the strange animals have been bred by the Damele family ever since 1898 when the founder of the ranch, Peter Damele, roped three of them from a herd of thousands of other horses running wild in the Peter

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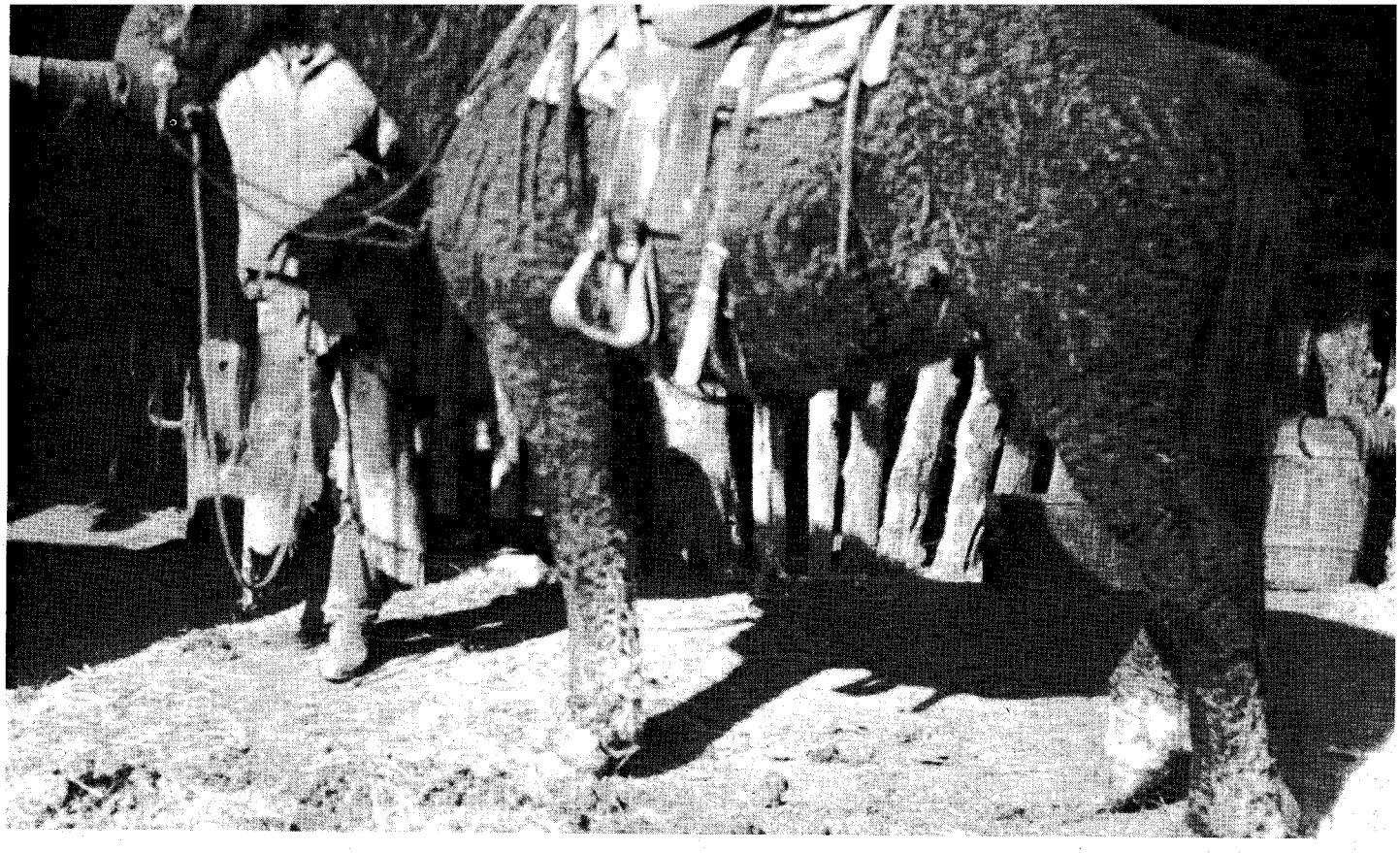
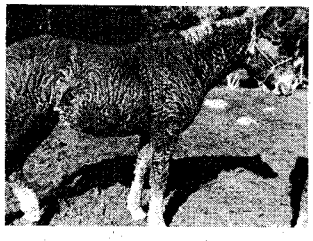
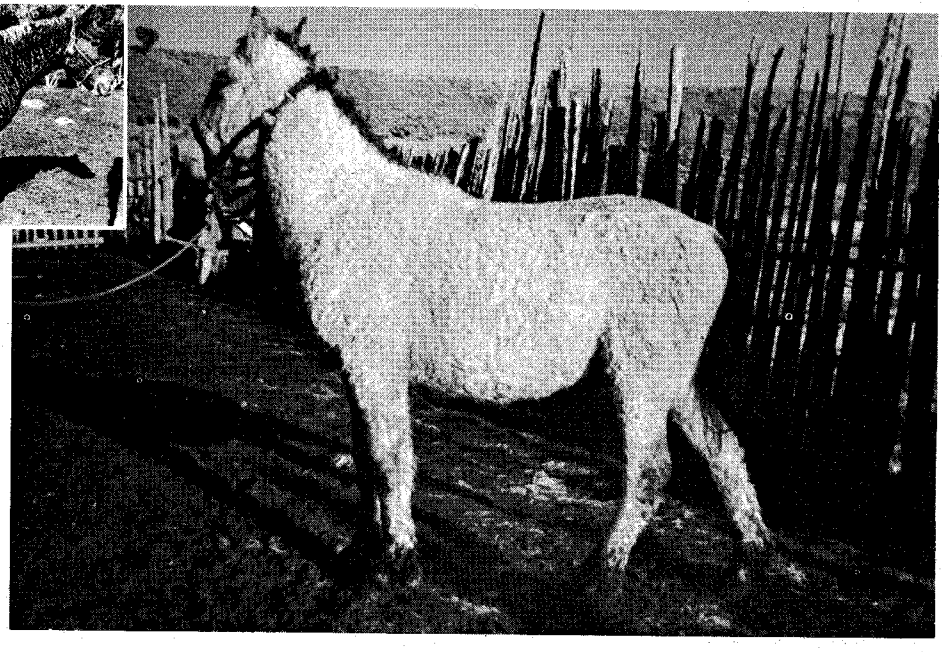


Photos of the curly horse taken at Peter Damele's ranch in central Nevada.

THE HORSE?

By CHORAL PEPPER
Photos Courtesy Author





Hanson mountain range. The ones his son now breeds are all descended from this bloodline. Other early ranchers occasionally traded Indians for the "buffalo horses," although the breed was always rare in spite of its potency and hardiness.

Damele tells of a particularly severe winter in 1932 on the open range in northern Nevada when a few curly-haired horses were the only wild ones to survive. He believes they can live on snow, with-

(Continued on page 72)

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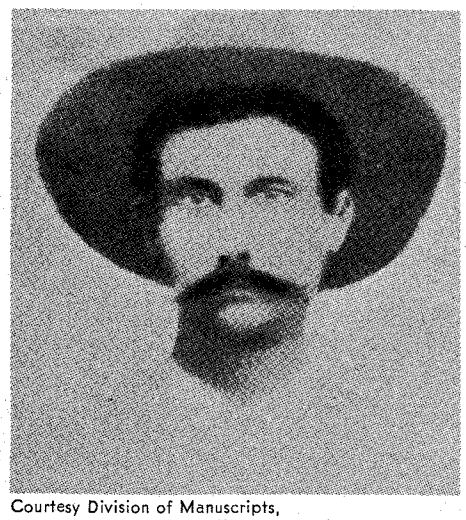
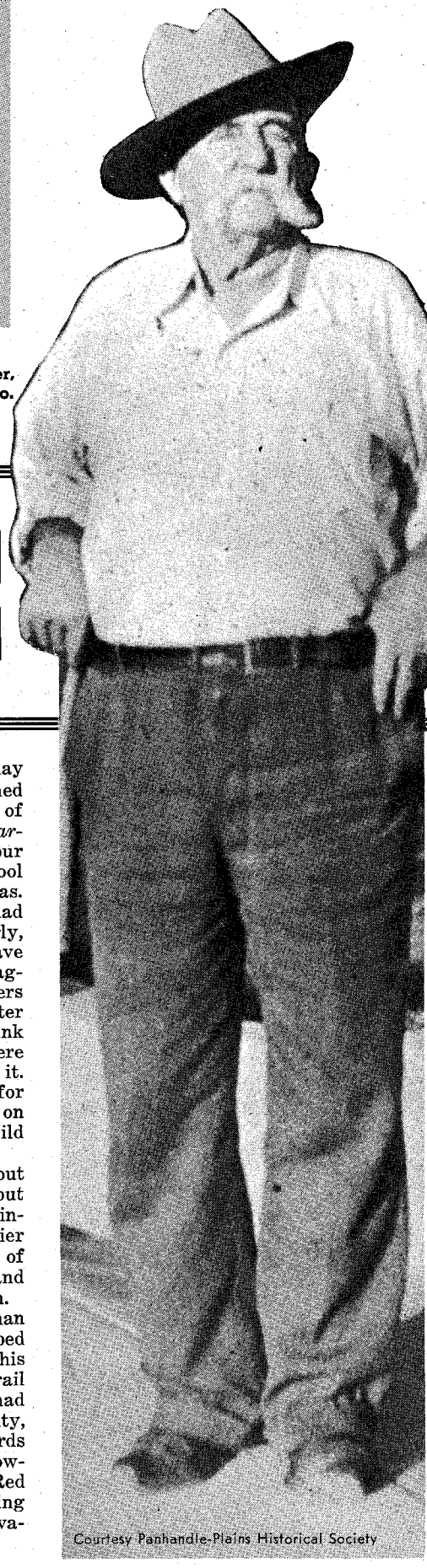


Courtesy Division of Manuscripts, University of Oklahoma Library

Bass Outlaw, at one time a Texas Ranger, was killed by John Selman in El Paso.

By COLIN RICKARDS

Photos Courtesy Author



Courtesy Panhandle-Plains Historical Society

Frank Collinson in later years.

THE COWBOY

ON A COLD and windy September day in 1872 a slim palefaced youth named Frank Collinson leaned over the rail of the Black Star Line steamship *San Marcos* and waved to his family. An hour later the ship slipped out of the Liverpool docks and headed for Galveston, Texas.

Born November 13, 1855, Collinson had attended school near his home at Beverly, near Hull, in Yorkshire. He might have had a most uneventful life had his imagination not been captured by some letters from a relative. Soon young Walter James ("Frank") Collinson could think or talk of nothing but Texas, and there was little his family could do about it. He had been lassoing the gate posts for weeks and all his pocket money went on books and pamphlets about the Wild West.

His mother had reservations about letting her son go so far from home but she need not have worried. Frank Collinson survived the roughest of frontier days and lived to the ripe old age of eighty-seven, a highly respected and successful Yorkshireman-turned-Texan.

He went to work first for Will Noonan near Castroville, Texas, and soon shaped up as a first-class cowboy. Before his twenty-first birthday he had made a trail drive to Pine Ridge, South Dakota; he had seen the rough and ready Dodge City, then little more than a few stockyards but destined to be the Queen of the Cowtowns in Kansas; he had talked to Red Cloud, the mighty leader of the fighting Sioux who were then living on a reservation, at peace with the white man.

Soon after returning from the trail drive Frank Collinson decided that cowboying at forty dollars a month and found was not exciting enough for him. The great, shambling buffalo herds were being slaughtered by hunters who sold the hides to traders in Dodge City. Collinson quit his job, bought a heavy calibre buffalo gun and joined the hunters on the Texas plains.

Small bands of buffalo hunters in pursuit of the herds braved the wrath of Comanches and Kiowas. It was a tough and strenuous life, but completely to Collinson's liking. He joined up with a man who called himself Jim White, a name he had assumed after a shooting scrape in New Mexico. White was an experienced frontiersman who had fought the Sioux in Montana and had survived the worst days at Fort Phil Kearny, Wyoming. He had been one of the defenders at the Wagon Box Fight in August 1867, and had helped build Fort Union in New Mexico. Collinson learned a great deal from him.

THE COMANCHES and Kiowas had failed to destroy the buffalo hunters at the Battle of Adobe Walls a few months before Collinson joined up with Jim White. From Billy Dixon, Bat Masterson and fellow Englishman Harry Armitage who had lived through the siege, Collinson learned what to expect from Indian warriors. Soon he was as good a buffalo hunter as could be found on the Plains. On one occasion he killed 121 of the animals from a single stand

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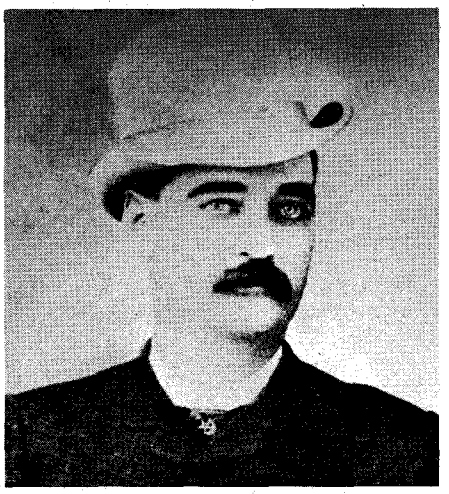

Courtesy Kansas State Historical Society

Bat Masterson taught Frank Collinson a lot about buffalo hunting and Indian fighting.

Courtesy National Archives

Collinson met Billy the Kid twice and thought him shabby.

Courtesy Division of Manuscripts, University of Oklahoma Library

John Selman, gunfighter and lawman, who participated in a gunfight to which the cowboy from Yorkshire was a witness.

FROM YORKSHIRE

Frank Collinson was just the right age and had just the right temperament to thread his way through the hazards of the frontier and escape unscathed. He was young enough to roll with the punch and wasn't hunting trouble—just observing it!

and his skinners had work for several days preparing hides to be hauled to Dodge City.

For eighteen months Frank Collinson hunted the buffalo and never had any serious trouble with Indians. But by the spring of 1877 the Comanches and Kiowas were active again. Their war parties raided among the hunters' camps with increased ferocity. It was the desperate last stand of a people who would soon be penned on reservations, their fighting power broken forever.

In February they attacked the camp of John Cook and Rankin Moore but were driven off. The same day they killed a popular hunter, Marshal Soule, and sent a dozen others fleeing to Rath's trading post. Bill Devins' camp was attacked, but he escaped by leaving all his hides, supplies and ammunition behind.

White hunters gathered angrily at Charlie Rath's trading post on Double Mountain Creek. There were bitter words against the Army which had failed to protect them. At last the talk turned to making a raid against the Comanches and doing what the military had so far avoided.

Jim Campbell, a doughty Scots hunter who had fought at the Battle of Adobe Walls, was chosen leader because of his long experience as an Indian fighter. The hunters filled five wagons with food, ammunition, oats for their horses and a barrel of whiskey for themselves. Frank Collinson listened to the plans and decided to go along too.

"Our guide was Spotted Jack, a tall, dark-skinned, black-eyed man, part Indian, part Negro, and part white," Frank Collinson recalled many years later. "He had lived with the Comanches most of his younger life and was a fine scout, a good shot, and a great whiskey drinker."

The avengers left Rath's post on March 31, 1877, determined to teach the Indians a harsh lesson and put an end to their interference.

"The spring weather was fine for an outing, and I rode my good horse over virgin territory, glad I was alive and looking forward to the scalp hunt," Collinson said. "I thought that before it was over I might have a scalp or two hanging from my saddle horn.

"I might send one of them home to my folks back in England to give them an idea of the wild and woolly West in far-off Texas."

TWO NIGHTS out of Rath's the scouts reported Indian sign leading toward Yellow House Draw, a dried-up river bed which was named after a ruined and abandoned mud house, the former home of a daring buffalo hunter who had built it as a base from which to hunt in hostile Indian territory. Spotted Jack, riding far ahead of the party, found the Comanche village in the bottom of the draw and rode back to report its size.

The hunters cleaned and primed their guns and checked their gear. Tomorrow they would be in action. The whiskey barrel was opened and the men drank their fill.

"There was much excitement in camp that night," Collinson remembered. "It was like a picnic. The men felt that the big fight would soon be coming and celebrated accordingly. The more they drank, the more scalps they envisioned as souvenirs. By early morning, when we headed up the draw, many of them were still half-shot."

Spotted Jack rode to the very mouth of the draw and reined in his horse. Jim Campbell spurred forward to join him. The Comanche village was just stirring

(Continued on page 61)

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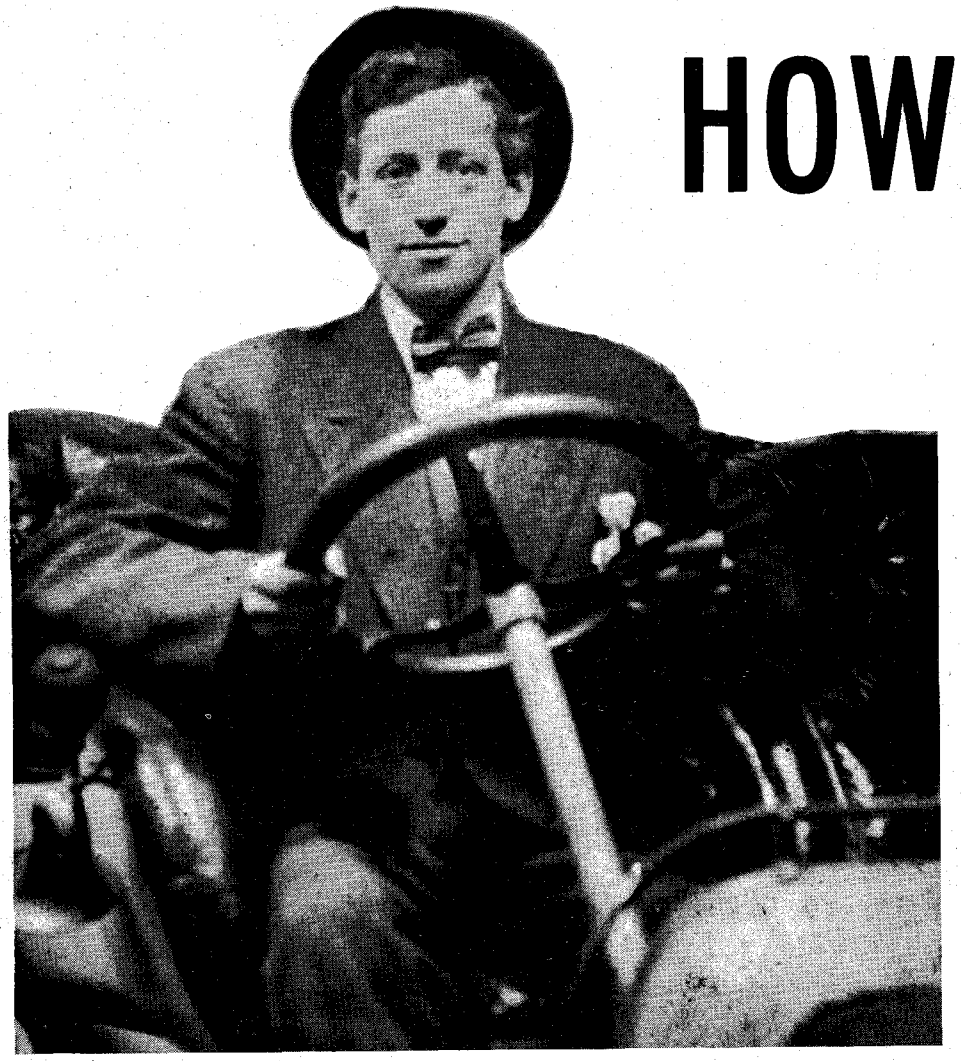
A floorman at the old Turf Club in Rhyolite does a little "looking back" and comes up with the question...

HOW GREEN



SOMETIME around 1904, Shorty Harris and his partner, Ed Cross, were prospecting in southern Nevada not too far from Death Valley. One day they found an outcropping of rhyolite, which is green in color like the malachite found in copper mines. History differs as to who said, "Jeez—it looks like a bullfrog," but it is agreed that Shorty made the discovery and his partner named the original Bullfrog Claim which had a good gold content.

Soon thereafter, up the hill about a mile east, a townsite was plotted and named Rhyolite. This was real desert, no timber thereabout to build with, hence the unusual number of brick and concrete business buildings that already were there in the fall of 1906 when I arrived in town.

I had met a newspaperman in Los Angeles who was leaving shortly for that camp to work for a Mr. Mannix who published the *Bullfrog Miner*. The paper was soon to get out a souvenir edition, which was common practice those

Above, the author wheels a 2-cylinder, right-hand-drive Climax car not unlike the one which carried his party up into the Panamint Mountains one winter on a three-day tour of new camps. Below, Golden Street, Rhyolite, Nevada, in 1906.

Courtesy Las Vegas Review-Journal

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IS A BULLFROG?

By GUS A. WURDINGER

Photos Courtesy Author

days. My friend would secure a list of the leading merchants and other professional men and offer them a chance to have their pictures in this issue for a price (ten dollars and up) over a write-up of just what prominent citizens they were, plus a number of copies to be sent out to their friends (the number of copies and the size of the write-up depending on the amount of their donation or subscription).

Having nothing to hold me down where I was, as soon as I had a little jingle in my pockets I followed the journalist, taking the old Salt Lake, Los Angeles and San Pedro train (now Union Pacific). As my ticket read only to Las Vegas, I would have to hit the rods to go on north to Beatty, which was a hundred and a few miles away.

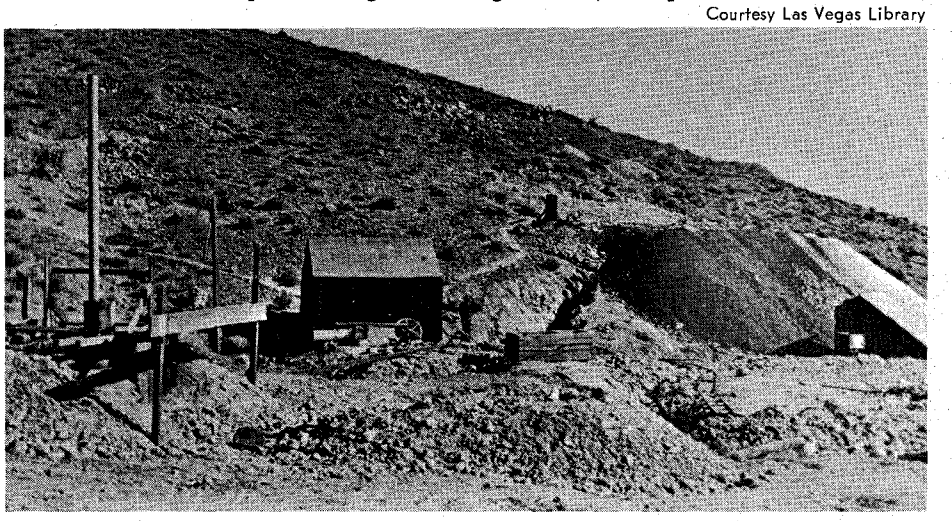
On the train I met a lad, a signal repairman for the Salt Lake road. Learning my financial status, he offered to share his room with me at Las Vegas. That night he introduced me to a brakie on the Las Vegas and Tonopah Railroad, and the next day I rode in a boxcar of way freight all the way to Beatty and then on a few miles over the hill to Rhyolite. If it seems odd that this railroad man offered to share his room with a total stranger, remember this was the custom before the automobile made the faraway places so accessible to the tin horn and the city slicker.

While it was considered none of your damn business to ask a man real personal questions, it was okay to say, "When did you get in?" "Have you eat yet?" and, if the guy was broke, "Share my bunk if you want to." This was not charity but a way of life. Miners working until they got a sizeable stake would quit, blow all or most of it, hit the road to another camp, and usually arrive broke.

You see, the guy asking questions and eager to share with you might, within the year, be broke and hungry in another camp and himself be on the receiving end. Too bad this kind of hospitality is dying out. And another reason was that, being a stranger in town, perhaps you had just come from a place he was planning to go or else had been, and he

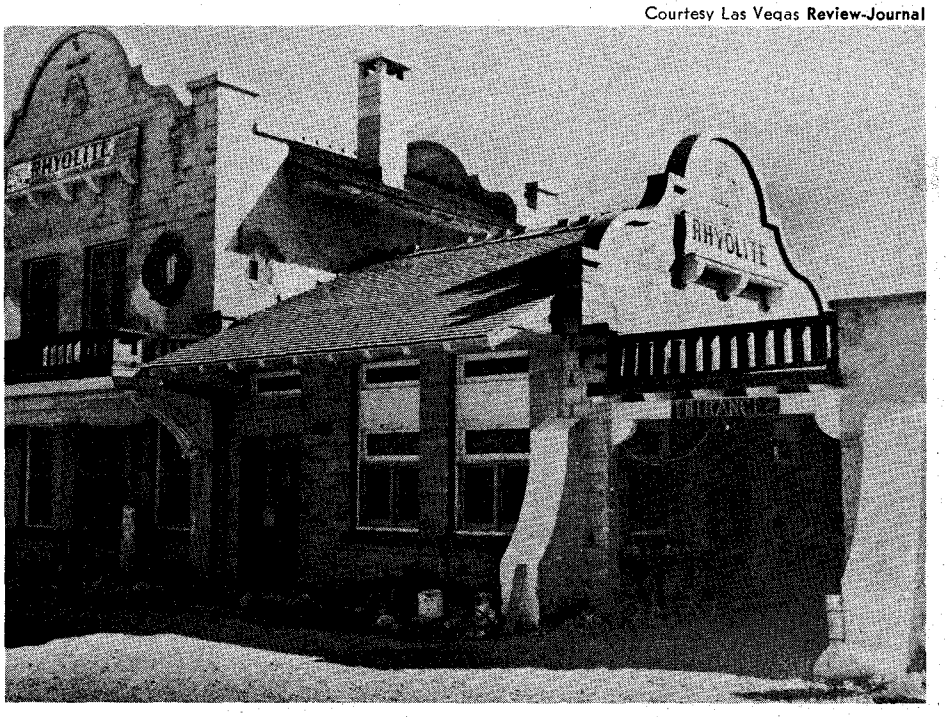
Shorty Harris' original Bullfrog claim in a 1905 photo.

Courtesy Las Vegas Library



Rhyolite's $100,000 depot for the Las Vegas-Tonopah Railroad is one of two buildings still standing, the other being the famous Bottle House. When built, the depot was considered finer than the one in Reno.

Courtesy Las Vegas Review-Journal



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was anxious to hear all the news from there.

MY FIRST NIGHT in town was spent at the Mayflower Hotel at three bucks a night. But the next day I located a rag dump, a building of corrugated iron but with partitions inside of canvas or muslin, making "rooms" just large enough to hold a cot and a commode. One had some privacy but not from the snoring at night, even from the far end of the building.

Next morning after my arrival, I met a fellow who was a shill in a gambling house and who was leaving town next day. He offered to try to get me his old job. His boss was agreeable to the change and I went to work that day at fifty cents per hour, the same as a plumber or carpenter got.

The word "shill" is short for "Shillaber," and I understand shillaber is a Bible word somewhere but I don't know about that. My job was from 2 to 6 p.m., and before I started I was given a handful of chips (the boss always knew *exactly* how many) and was told to play at idle games to stimulate interest and then back out and go to another game when play got going good.

Gamblers and bartenders got a dollar per hour and—what seemed odd to me at first—were paid off at the end of each shift. This did away with most of the bookkeeping and besides, as I learned later, a number of places recently had changed hands overnight, being put up in a high stakes game. This way, the winner got the place debt-free.

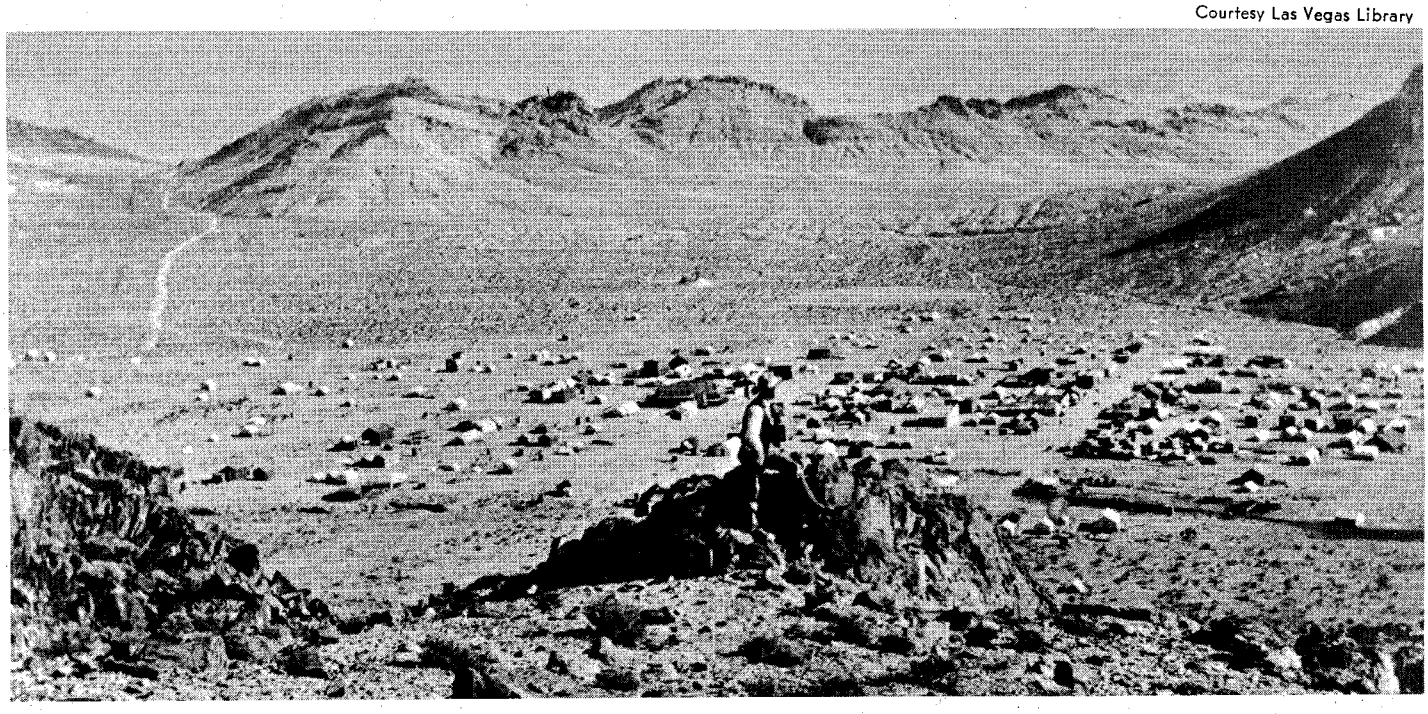
The old bar from the '66 Club now is used in a snack and gift shop in part of the old $100,000 railroad depot which, when built, was considered finer than that up in the big city of Reno. This depot and an old bottle house are the only complete buildings still standing.

Within a few days I got a full-time job next door with Jack Cheney, a San Franciscan who owned the Turf Club, where I became porter, floorman, and general factotum. Before the winter was over, Cheney had sold out to Ed Arnold and Frank Snavelly, but I hung onto my job.

When Cheney left, he willed me his dugout to live in. For those not familiar,

Bonanza Mountain in 1905 offered the visitor a panoramic view of Rhyolite nestled beneath Lane and Montgomery Mountains. The Montgomery-Shoshone mine operation is up the side of the shadowy mountain to the right. Today little is left of boom-town Rhyolite (bottom photo). Remains of the multi-storied Cook Brothers Bank building are just right of center in the distance.

Courtesy Las Vegas Library



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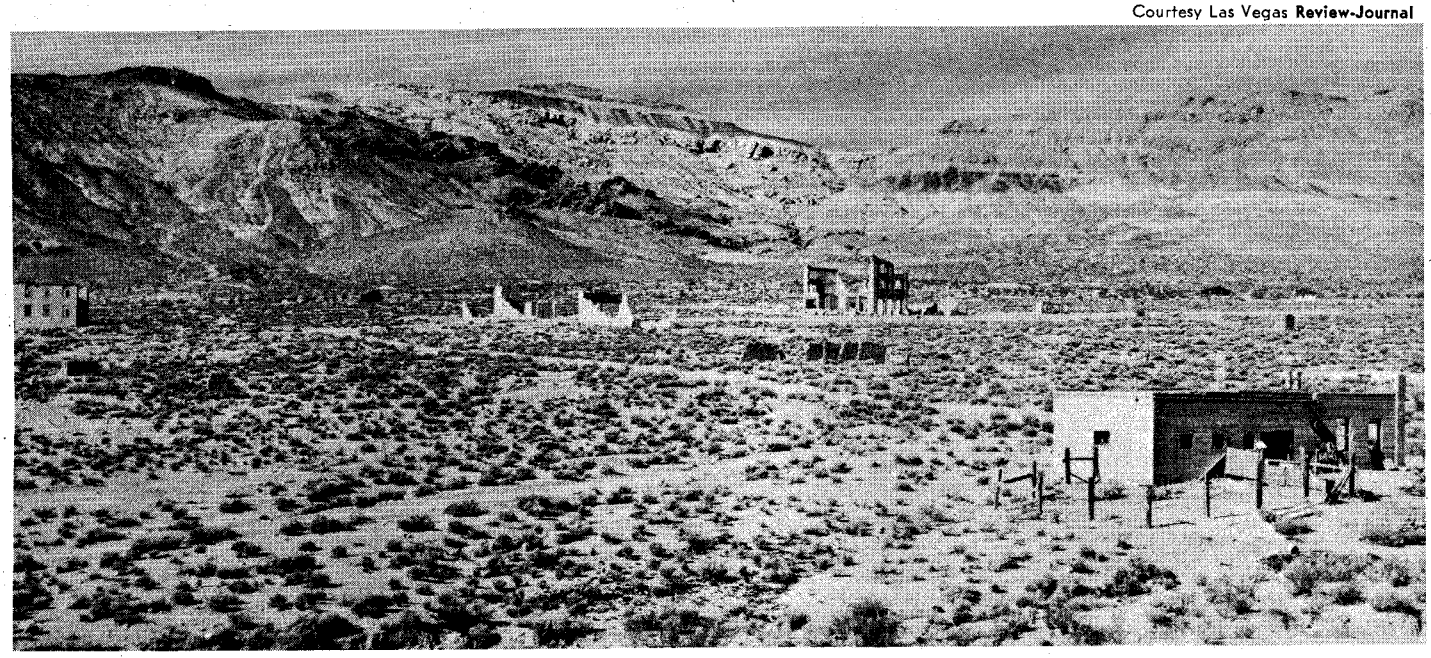

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it was just that: a hole dug into the side of a hill. One looks for a gulch with steep sides; then, being sure he's above the flash-flood water marks, starts digging straight in. Mine was nine by ten feet overall, two by four studding open wall, and had a flat tar-paper roof covered with dirt and rocks for insulation. A board front with a door and a small window completed the job, and the dugout was warm in winter and cool in summer. Often my key was loaned to fellows and gals alike who needed a little extra rest.

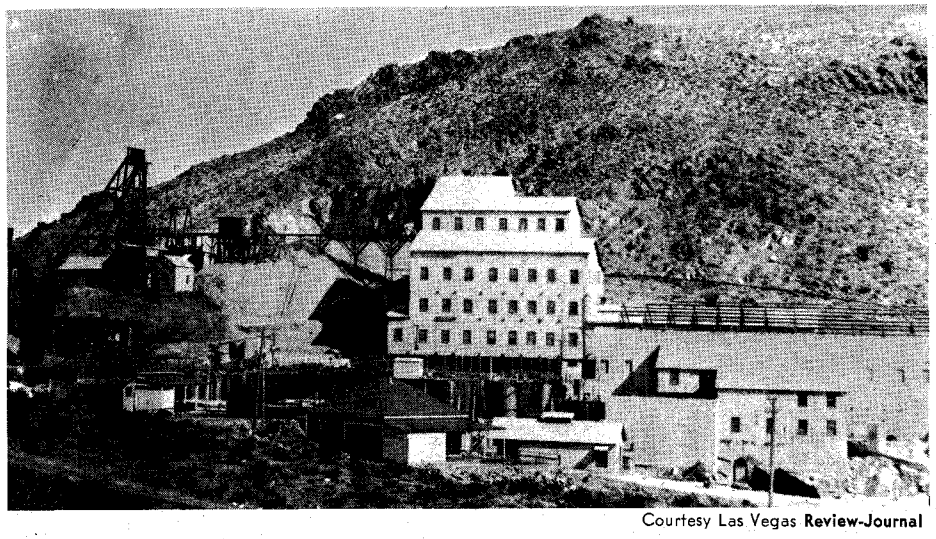
Many hardrock miners were prospectors between jobs which usually were taken only to accumulate another grubstake. Most owned a pack burro or two and when working or just living easy in town, the burros were turned loose, often with a bell or tag around the neck. The majority were pets and would leave the herd when called, especially if the owner held up a loaf of stale bread. There were probably more than a hundred burros scattered in the hills around town. Forming in herds of twenty or more, each herd seemed to take turns coming down into town to investigate the garbage cans in the alleys and pick up anything edible elsewhere.

One old burro, called Maud after a comic strip character of those old days, was real smart. After lifting the lids off the garbage cans with her strong teeth and not getting filled up, she'd go around to the front of the eating places, grab the screen door handle, pull, and stick her head in. She did this regularly every day and usually was rewarded with half a flapjack, a hunk of bread, or a piece of doughnut. With a final bray or two when no more food was coming her way, she'd back out and go to the next place, always followed by a crowd of folks watching. Old Maud seemed to recognize a camera and, when about to have her picture "took," would always present a rear view. If given an apple or other treat, she'd stand quiet until either the eats were gone or the picture was finished, whichever came first.

A favorite campfire story all through the years has been about the sagacity—or else the obstinacy—of the burro. About how a burro, like a mule, can be strong-willed enough to refuse to leave a bit of shade, while the prospector, resigning himself to take a rest too, stoops and picks up some good ore he never would have seen. Or, about how a runaway burro, who had to be chased down, led the prospector away from a site where later a good strike of ore was made.

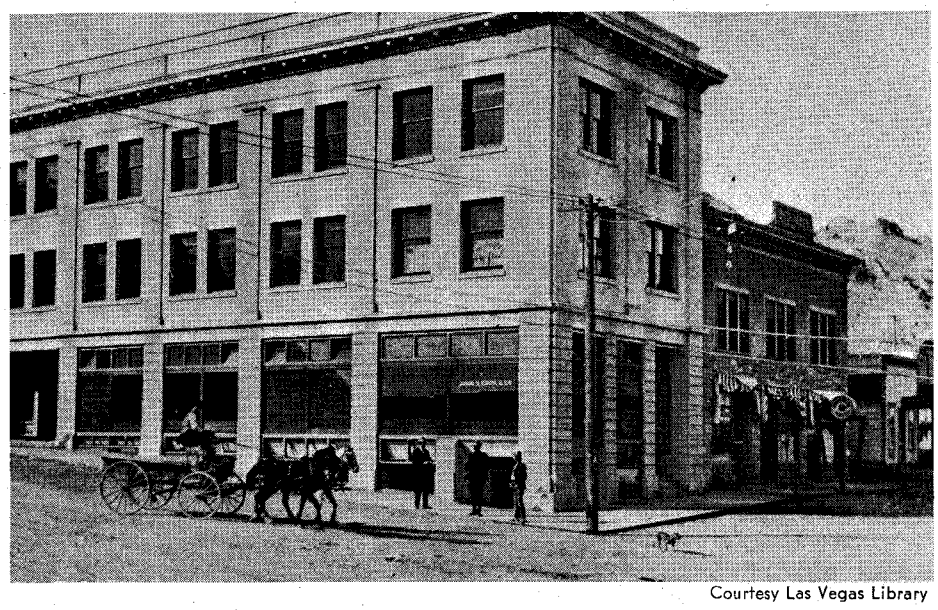
My dugout was about a quarter mile from town and I had a bunkie. Everyone who lived beyond the bright lights downtown traveled, especially at night, on the alert. Hearing crunching gravel underfoot or seeing a strange shadow caused suspicion, so folks usually called out and made an indentification to each other. As the paper quoted, "Many a person has been held up this spring, then badly beaten because they only had a dollar or two on them."

One bright moonlight morning, after we'd got home at 3 a.m., put out the lantern, and were almost asleep, my bedmate nudged me in the ribs, whispering, "I saw someone looking in our window." Lying on my elbow, I watched but saw nothing and soon gave up. But I was hardly back on the pillow when, "There he is again," came from my buddy.



Courtesy Las Vegas Review-Journal

Above, the Montgomery-Shoshone mine entrance and mill buildings on the outskirts of Rhyolite. Below, the town's once-impressive Cook Brothers Bank building about 1905.



Courtesy Las Vegas Library

Grabbing my .38 special off its hook, I flung the front door open. There, a few hundred feet away and running, was a burro which was what my buddy had seen. Being sleepy and mad, I emptied the gun at him before I went back to bed, although he was away out of range.

Many tenderfoot miners used too much powder when starting a prospect hole, blowing debris sky-high and often causing loose rockslides. This same night we were awakened by the shaking of our bed, and heard loose rock falling behind our walls. Either a big blast or an earthquake, but an emergency—no foolin'! We grabbed the edges of the mattress and rolled towards the bed center, prepared for the worst. But nothing much happened.

With the commotion over, we went outside to find a herd of burros giving us the "old hee-haw." We afterwards figured that the burro I'd fired at had got his gang together, and to get even with us they had all run down the hill and right smack over the roof of our dugout. (They more than got even except that we were able to take on a couple of shots of whiskey to quiet our nerves.)

I MADE MANY acquaintances while out on the desert, among whom was Henry Starck, or "Hank" as we called him. Later, after we had both married, we were neighbors down at Newport Beach, California. Hank was of German descent and spoke English and German fluently. He had a most gentle disposition and took life just as it came. Not that he lacked courage, he could and would fight if need be, but he seldom did and this is the funny part. Naturally being so easy going, sooner or later some big bully with a load of hooch aboard would try to pick a fight with him. Then Hank would stand up, stick his face into the other's and call him all the cuss words he could remember or ever knew. But he cussed in German, cooling off his own temper and leaving the other

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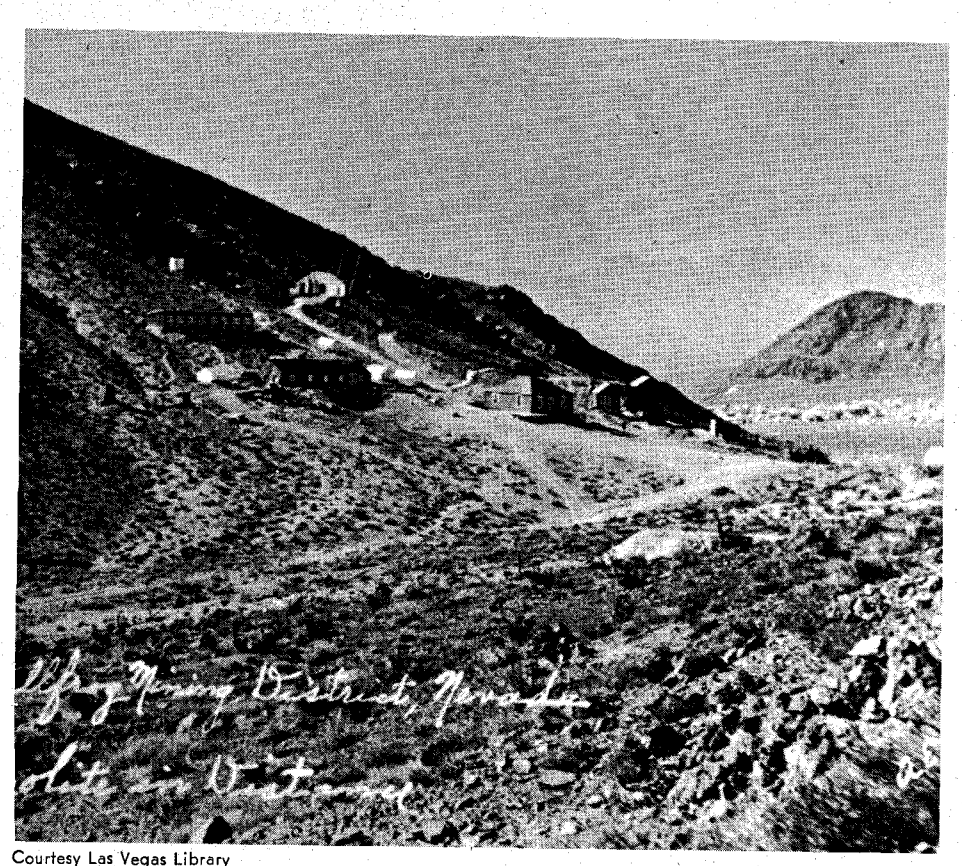

Courtesy Las Vegas Library

Montgomery-Shoshone mine and mill with Rhyolite in the distance.

guy flabbergasted, not understanding a word of what was said. With all the ensuing laughter, the "almost" fight always ended with the bully admitting the drinks were on him.

I first met Shorty Harris on a trip up in the Panamints. He had a claim at Wildrose, Harrisburg, and Skidoo. Skidoo was named after a popular saying of the day, "23 Skidoo for you." This was used in the same way as today when some undesirable insists on hanging around and you say, "Beat it."

Walter Scott was better known as Death Valley Scotty. Of course, most folks know about Mr. Johnson, who was Scotty's "angel" and backer, but those days half of us thought he had a rich mine and the rest thought he was a highgrader.

Often, while working for wages, a miner would hit a rich vein or pocket of ore, some of which he'd try to keep for himself. But to get it out of the mine was something else. The change room was a barrier because here one had to strip and hang up his wet and dirty work clothes in the dry box, then walk through a door into the washroom. After bathing, he had to go through a door, still naked, into the locker room, where towels and street clothes were hung. This made it almost impossible to smuggle anything out on one's person, so other schemes were tried.

Up Goldfield way at some of the richer mines, before they set up flood lights and Pinkerton guards, the following method was used successfully. Put some rich, highgrade ore—when no one was watching—into a canvas sack, previously stashed in the mine. When changing shifts, tip off your relief as to where the bag was hidden. Later, he would drop it into an ore car with a load of muck (valueless waste rock) to be dumped onto the tailings pile. After dark it could be recovered. Anyone stealing, handling, selling, or assaying highgrade ore was known as a highgrader.

Once that winter I was invited along on a three-day trip up into the Panamint Mountains to several of the new camps. The "extras" we carried along with us would almost stock an auto supply store today. We had a rear axle, tire patches and hand pump, spare tubes and casing, besides a number of five-gallon cans with supplies of oil, gasoline, and water.

Motor trouble or a flat meant roadside repairs. With demountable rims, the tire and tube were pulled off the wheel, a patch was applied, and tire and tube were put back on. Then the hand pump went into action. As all tires were high pressure—30 to 50 pounds—this was no easy chore. If going only a few blocks, everyone carried a Schrader pocket gauge to check tires.

We went via Daylight Pass, the eastern entrance into Death Valley, past Stovepipe and Emigrant Springs. Perhaps the Indian inhabitants of the desert knew about this green spot, green with vegetation that is, but to the early gold seekers it was a "must." Water was just below the surface in the sands and a scooped-out hole soon filled with water—slow, yes, but really thirst-quenching though one often got a mouthful of sand, too. Some good Samaritan once had an idea. He dug down as far as he could, stuck a couple of joints of pipe from his camp stove on end, and thereby insured fresh water right away. Today, with a resort hotel and other accessories of civilization close by, this spot still retains its intriguing name of Stovepipe Wells. On our return, after passing Stovepipe again, we turned down the valley to Furnace Creek Ranch. There was no hotel or other accommodations, only a bunkhouse and cookhouse for the borax company employees.

I wonder how many of you folks have ever been out on the high desert on a moonless night with not a cloud in the sky and the stars in the clear, rarified atmosphere seeming almost within reach? The reflection of the stars is so bright, one just has to see it to believe it.

Climbing the grade again past where the big hotel now stands, we took another pass and after crossing the Funeral Range descended to a desert ranch about where Death Valley Junction is today. Then following the Armagosa River, we finally got back to Rhyolite. I am approaching eighty-six now but I'll always remember that trip.

WITHOUT GOING outside, one could always tell when the wind was blowing. Most all lighting and cooking was done either with gasoline or kerosene (coal oil we called it) which was sold in square, five-gallon cans. These empty cans, together with old bottles, were thrown on a pile out back near the alley and when the pile got too large, a trip was made to the dumps just outside town. When strong winter winds from the north blew over Ladd Mountain, the gale toyed with these cans, rolling them on the ground and down the streets and alleys to the open desert at the bottom of the hill. What eerie sounds came to our ears on a stormy winter night!

Winter meant lots of sickness, especially heavy colds and pneumonia, and we had several funerals a week. (Perhaps burials would be the better word, as we had no carriages or hearse.) There was an undertaker's establishment in the rear of one of the stores but no chapel to hold services.

Rites usually were conducted at the graveside, and though a few caskets were stocked, more often a plain wooden box was used. This was placed on the bed of a two-horse transfer wagon, and the mourners followed on foot down to the cemetery plot. After a few words of prayers, folks broke up in small groups and walked back up the hill to resume their daily activities.

One story I remember bears telling. The town drunkard passed on and all were eager to hear what the local politician, who had charge of the services, would say. "Friends," he began, "all of us know that Old Buck was a moocher, barfly, drunkard and general no-good, but we all have at least one good trait and Old Buck had his. We must all admit that he did have a GOOD appetite!"

Most saloons were named according to the owner's fancy, like "Last Chance," "Silver Dollar," or "Gold Strike," but many others were named after the particular beer or bar whiskey they specialized in and maybe even had the agency for. Names like Johnny Walker, Old Crow, or Hermitage Bars were common.

(Continued on page 58)

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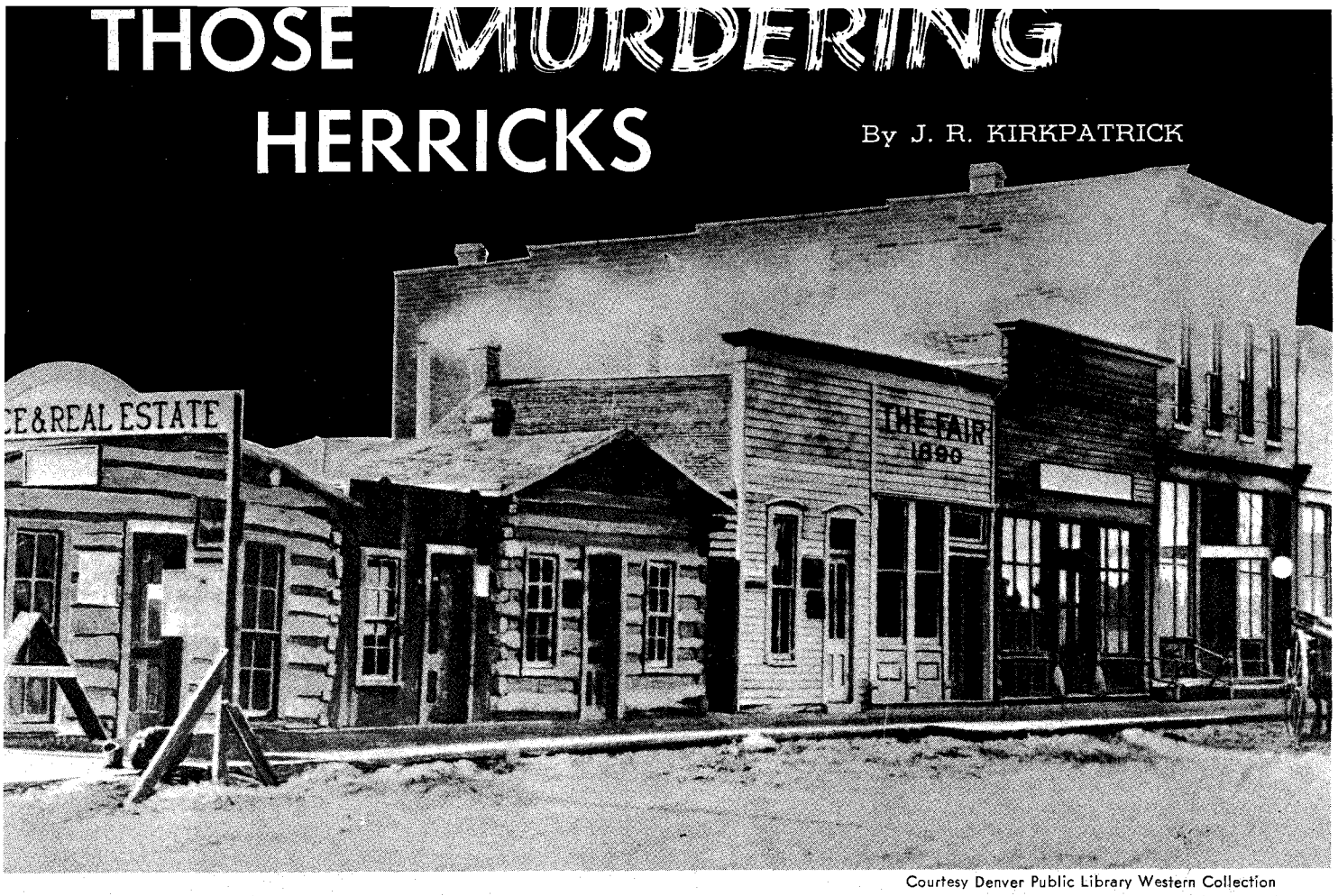
THOSE MURDERING HERRICKS

By J. R. KIRKPATRICK



Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection

Grand Junction, Colorado, 1890.

Their malice toward each other was so great only a trigger had the vocabulary to put it into words!

"MAGGIE HERRICK'S in town!" The clerk, a pudgy man in a jacket a size too small, volunteered the information to William Green, owner and manager of the Grand Junction House.

"Maggie in town? You sure?"

"Yessir. She signed in here 'bout an hour ago."

"Mmmm. You'd better go over to the Pig's Ear and see if you can find someone from the Herrick ranch. One of their cowboys was in town this morning, and may still be here. If you find him, tell him to get word to Henry. Henry'd like to have advance notice his ex-wife is back."

The clerk returned from his errand about fifteen minutes later. "Find anyone?" the proprietor asked.

"Yessir. It was the new hand they hired, and he was gettin' drunk. He said he'd ride out, but he won't be able to sit a horse in 'nother hour."

Green shrugged. "Well, we did what we could. I'd sure hate to see Maggie make trouble for Henry, though."

The Herrick marriage had come to an end in the spring of 1883. The couple had built up a good ranch on Kannah Creek, some seventeen miles south of the lusty frontier town of Grand Junction, Colorado. Maggie was domineering and sharp-tongued, and Henry's stubborn nature led to numerous verbal battles between them. So Maggie finally packed her valise, wrung a sizeable amount of money from Henry, and left him. She had relatives in Albuquerque, and she rode the uncomfortable, cinder-spewing Denver and Rio Grande train out of town. Henry promptly applied for a divorce.

GRAND JUNCTION was only two years old then, spawned by the rush of settlers to the former Ute reservation in western Colorado. The newcomers, held at bay by army troops until the Indians were removed, rushed onto the new land. The Utes were transported from Colorado on September 4, 1881, to the Uintah and Duchesne River valleys in Utah Territory. Grand Junction townsite was established immediately, and the valley surrounding it was called Grand Valley.

The new settlement, a nondescript huddle of tents that fall and winter, was located at the junction of the Gunnison

(Continued on page 64)

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THE DEATH WATCH

By MAURICE KILDARE

Photos Courtesy Author

GRAY DUSK lingered in the timber as we drove in at the Lem Jeatters' farm. Other buckboards, buggies, wagons and some saddled horses were tethered to trees well away from the house. It stood in the fringe of hardwood next to land which had been cleared for farming.

A curious, depressing stillness hung like a pall over the premises. It was a deep, penetrating thing. More than a hundred men, women and children were present, yet there was nothing of the crowd "buzz" about them.

Indeed, most curious of all were the other silences. On a farm, barnyard noises abound day and night. But here, nothing. The livestock, even the hogs and chickens, were quiet. The elements also seemed to have joined this conspiracy of creating no noise while the Jeatters boy was slowly dying.

Mother drove the buckboard to within a quarter mile of the house, pulling off the rocky road under a blackjack tree. Tying the team was left to me as I was a year or so older than Brother.

The span of horses secured, tugs unfastened and neckyoke let down, we stood a moment on the roadside. After looking around briefly, Mother led the way toward the boxing plank-and-batten, unpainted house of four rooms.

"Mind me, you boys behave yourselves," she admonished in a whisper.

Children of all ages sat around under the trees, their solemn faces looking as if they would burst into tears at any moment. All eyes were turned toward the house front. Men and women had separated, forming small, individual groups. Conversation was carried on in voices so low they couldn't be heard ten feet away. But there wasn't much of it.

Mother proceeded directly to the house. The doors and windows were all wide open for any vagrant breeze. Even in September that part of old Oklahoma was hot and muggy.

Brother and I joined kids our own age on their squatting ground near a bunch of men chewing tobacco or holding thick hay straws between their teeth. One elderly man spoke in a monotone about the awful conditions he experienced when first coming to Indian Territory.

Oklahoma creek-bottom farmers stand in front of their home built on blocks.

Oklahoma child poses for photo among the hogs.

Staring uneasily at the house, Brother and I sensed the hopeless despair of the situation. The Jeatters' big son, one of four and nineteen years old, had been unconscious with a high fever and dying for the past week. He might go any minute or he might live a few days longer.

Reportedly he had the "fall fever"—or so it was diagnosed by an old midwife. There wasn't a doctor in that part of the country closer than Coalgate, seat of Coal County. People were born, and lived, suffered and died without ever being attended by a physician. If calomel, quinine, molasses mixed with sulphur and Clover Leaf salve, or kerosene and salt didn't cure the patient, then he succumbed to some "unknown" disease or an infected

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wound. Bacon grease (or lard) and kerosene with turpentine was used as a cure for bronchitis as well as diphtheria and pneumonia.

Fall fever was actually a combination of typhoid and malaria. The victim had chills, ague and sometimes broke out with a rash. Always he suffered extremely high temperatures and had an erratic pulse. As Father always said, "He had the bugs." If the fever did not abate or home remedies cure him, the victim literally burned to death.

The malaria came from mosquitoes breeding in the bad water which spread the typhoid. Oklahomans suffered with virulent forms of this combination every late summer and fall.

Bad water? The muddy streams, greenish stagnant pools, and drying-up lakes scummed over, literally boiled with germs of all types. It is a wonder that people survived very long in that district. They could, and most likely did, suffer from many other diseases under the guise of ignorantly labeled typhoid-malaria, or what they called biliousness.

During the spring rains, streams and lakes were cleaned out with fresh water. Then as the current again grew sluggish, holes and pools fouled up. Worse, the carcasses of dead animals and other decaying matter thickened this water to soup. And it was used for all domestic purposes, even drinking and cooking. These poor people mistakenly believed that contaminated water after running through gravel twenty feet became "pure" again.

People ate fish caught in this death dealing liquid. That coupled with hog meat, animals in their turn carrying every possible germ, furnished the main diet for early Oklahoma settlers.

If the victim of fall fever failed to respond to family doctoring in two or three days, then his kinfolks, friends and neighbors sat around utterly helpless waiting for death to strike. People for miles around visited the unfortunate family to await the inevitable end. It was the death-watch.

Menfolks were handy to lay out the body and to carpenter a rough board coffin. The burying would be done within a few hours. In that muggy climate a body began decaying almost at once.

THE DEATH WATCH was a gruesome thing, an eerie experience that could not be soon forgotten. Being unable to accomplish one solitary thing to ease the victim's pain was most pitiful.

At the Jeatters' farm, as night came on, a kerosene lamp was lit in the kitchen. There a few close women friends of the grief-stricken mother kept her company. Occasionally one of them went to the sick boy's room in the east end to change the wet cloths on his face.

Mothers, sometimes fathers, walked to their vehicles returning with quilts to make pallets for their chidren, none of whom could sleep, other than the nursing babies. Brother and I sat like fixed objects with the other kids, most of whom we knew well.

Now and then two or three men slipped around to the ramshackle barn and feed lot. A keg of Choctaw beer had been stashed there, probably in the granary. This brew was highly potent in the heat. It was indulged in by Oklahoma farmers in that area lying between the village of Olney on a branch railroad and Clear Boggy Creek. When they retreated from the keg some of them had trouble finding the ground with their feet.

The name "Clear Boggy" was used to distinguish it from Muddy Boggy, and it was certainly a misnomer. Like all the other creeks around, it stank with filth, flowing thick with unnameable polluted matter. During the spring rise it broke

(Continued on page 68)

Neighbors clustered in the farmyard like ragged, frightened sparrows, waiting to fly to the trees at the first wail of a dog...

The country school the author (center, X) attended.

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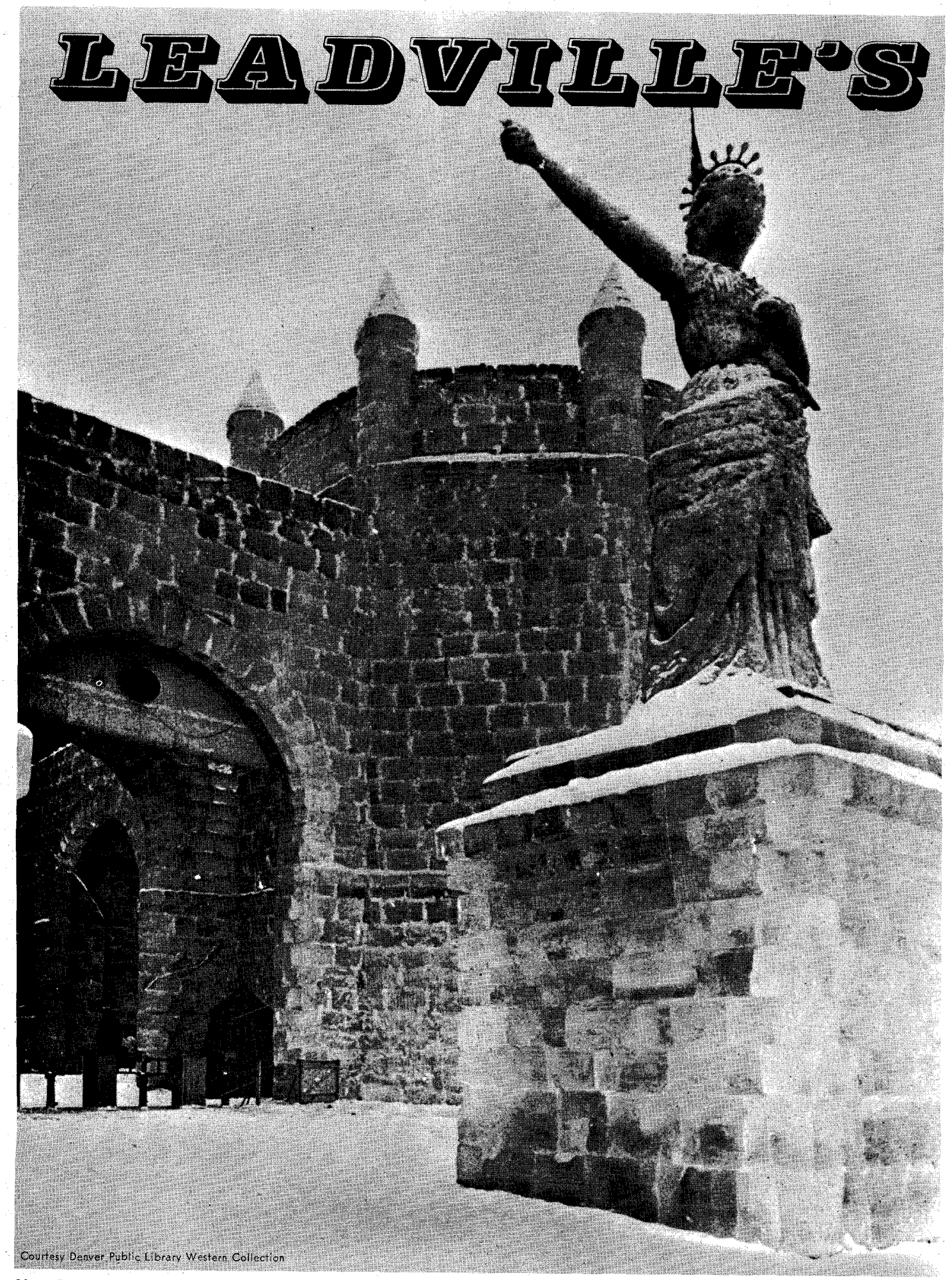
LEADVILLE'S



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ICE PALACE

By HANK GIVENS
Photos Courtesy Author

This could have been a real frozen asset if the weather had cooperated!

Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection
Tingley S. Wood was the director of building of the Leadville Ice Palace.

THE GLITTERING frost pile which cost more than $140,000 sprawled over Capitol Hill in Leadville, Colorado, like a ponderous jewel, its Norman castellated architecture rising in startling contrast to nearby frame buildings in the Carbonate Camp. It was 1896, and the elegant gem, built from more than 5,000 tons of ice, had gained the attention of the world.

To Tingley S. Wood, however, the Leadville Ice Palace had been a headache all the way. During the winter of 1895-1896 he had poured his talent and a small fortune into the project. He fought against such odds as a shortage of ice and a shortage of horses to haul it, workmen who were inexperienced in such fanciful construction, and the caprices of an exceptionally mild winter. When the spring of '96 arrived, a Leadville newspaper editor reported that Wood felt the best thing to do with the palace was to blow it off the earth with a cannon. He had had it!

Reports of ice castles built in Russia, Quebec and Montreal, Canada, and Saint Paul, Minnesota, had been filtering into the "City Above the Clouds" since 1883. With them came the idea of a winter carnival and ice palace to be built in Leadville, merely to put some gaiety into the coming dreary winter months for the local citizens. In 1895 there were approximately 12,000 residents in Leadville, but the town was located in a remote area which at times became a howling wilderness of frost and snow. Nobody from too far away would be interested in fighting the rigors of the climate in mid-winter just for a good time. A few prominent citizens, however, protested that Leadville had never done anything halfway. The proposed palace would have to be the most colossal structure ever built in the West, and one deserving of international attention, or they wouldn't support it.

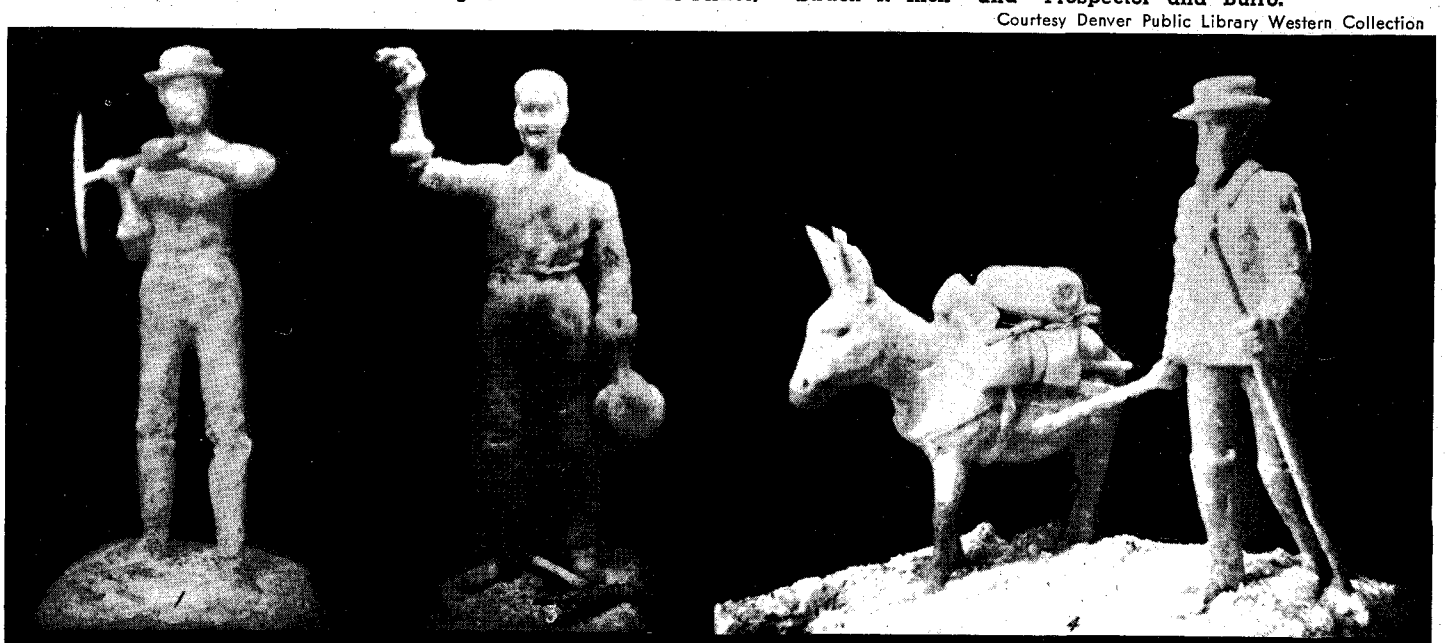
The project got off to a slippery start when Edwin W. Senior, a prominent realtor, was named director general and began plans for the carnival and ice castle to be constructed on a scale never attempted before. He thought that $10,000 ought to be sufficient to build the finest ice palace ever devised.

The nine board members under him were George Le'Abbie, French gambler and manager of the Board of Trade, Leadville's swankiest saloon at the time; J. W. Smith, partner in a dry goods store; J. J. Brown, who was to become the famous Leadville Johnny; C. T. Limberg, president of the American National Bank; S. D. Nicholson, a future state senator; C. N. Priddy, superintendent of the Leadville Water Company; J. H. Weddle, manager of the Arkansas Valley Smelter; D. H. Dougan, president of the Carbonate National Bank; and John Campion.

Incorporation papers for the Leadville

Left, the allegorical figure of "Leadville" points to the mountains where the people of the town reaped their fortunes. Posed on a 12-foot icy pedestal, she was 19 feet tall and sculptured of ice. Below, more-than-life-size sculptures were displayed throughout the palace. The statues, left to right, were entitled "A Miner," "Struck it Rich" and "Prospector and Burro."

Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection



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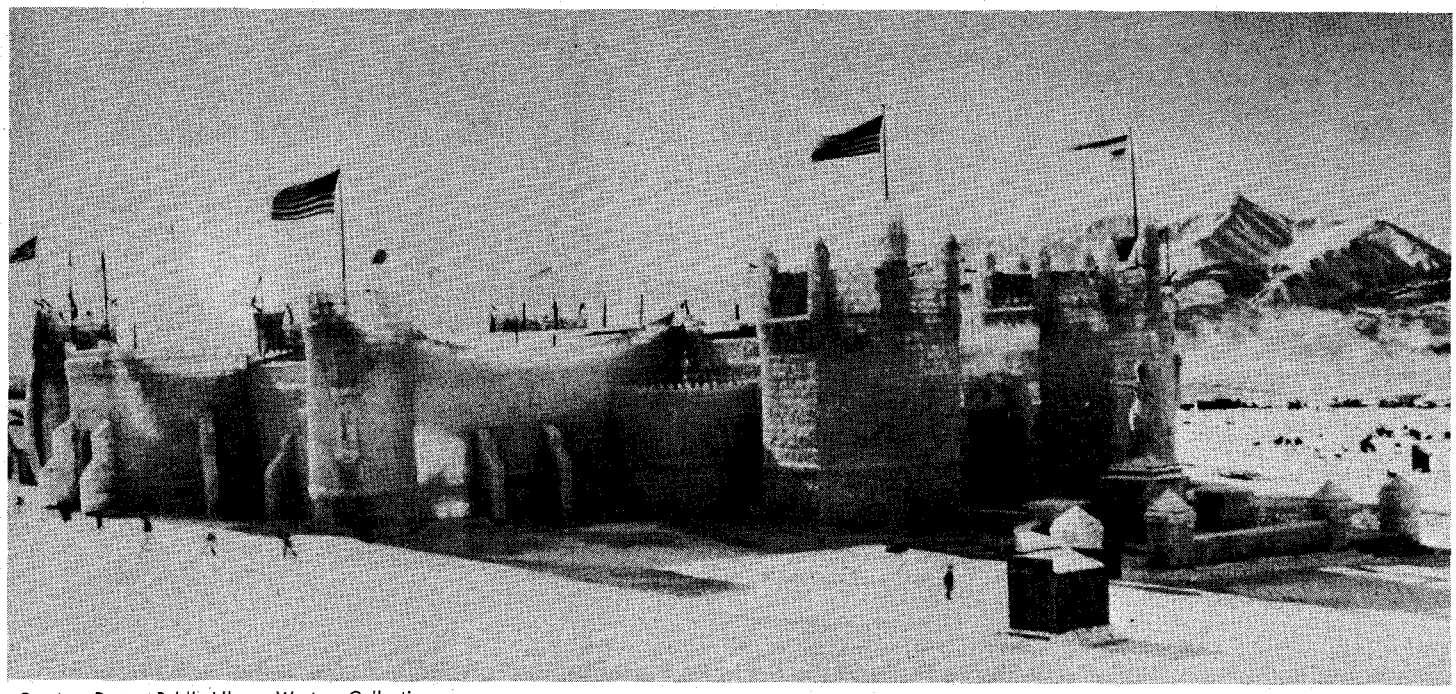

Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection

Main entrance to the fabulous palace which was to be the most magnificent symbol of fun the world had ever seen.

Ice Palace and Crystal Carnival Association were drawn up on September 25, 1895. But by September 29, Senior had proved to be enthusiastic but impractical, and had raised only $4,000.

"If Senior continues as director general of the ice palace, I won't contribute another penny," declared one citizen, voicing the opinion of most of Leadville's businessmen.

"If it means the success of the ice palace, I'll resign," Senior told his board of directors, and he did so in the middle of October.

IT WASN'T LONG before the board approached Tingley S. Wood about taking over the financially unremunerative position of director general, and he accepted. A native of southeastern Ohio, Wood was a highly respected businessman, a member of the Miners Board of Exchange, and general manager of the Lillian, Benton, and Antioch Mining Companies.

Wood met with the board of directors in the Vendome Hotel on October 26, 1895, and presented them with some elaborate ideas. It was customary to build structures of ice in the style of a Norman castle, because of the strength and durability of its massive walls. But Leadville's palace would be the most lavish that the world had ever seen. It was Wood's opinion that it would take at least $20,000 to build it, because one of Saint Paul's castles in 1887 had been built at a cost of $20,000.

Wood might have avoided a great many of the problems which the weird expensive pile of ice caused him had he not made this statement at the meeting: "After the citizens of Leadville raise the necessary $20,000, I personally will take care of the ice palace!"

The association sold stock at $1 per share and more than $40,000 was collected. In an effort to encourage donation to the palace fund, the *Herald Democrat* reported: "If built upon the idea now prevalent of making the structure permanent with regard to roof, dancing floor and skating rink, not only will it [the ice palace] be for winter, but for each winter hereafter, with only added expense each year of the ice, leaving the summer months for a beautiful pavilion to be used for public meetings, balls and picnics."

This was the beginning of the first of the Leadville Ice Palace's many unique features, since no other had ever been built to last permanently. In addition, the association decided that the festival and palace would last for the rest of the winter, while other cities planned carnivals for only a week or ten days, though their castles were allowed to last until spring.

Charles E. Jay, a well-known Saint Paul architect, was hired. In 1887 two ice palaces of much smaller dimensions had been constructed in conjunction with the winter carnival in Saint Paul; Jay had been architect for the palace shaped like a Latin cross.

Capitol Hill, a gentle rise in the 400 block between West Seventh and Eighth Streets on the west edge of town, was selected as the logical site for the ice palace. It commanded an imposing view of the Continental Divide on the west and the Mosquito Range on the east.

James A. Murray was named foreman in charge of construction and W. W. Coble was named superintendent in charge of laying the ice, erection of steel girders and construction of interior woodwork. Timber arrived on November 3, and carpenters spent the rest of the month sawing it into lumber.

DIRECTOR GENERAL WOOD soon began to think that he was doing personal battle with Mother Nature. The mildest winter that long-time residents of the Carbonate Camp could remember, had set in. W. H. Cole, manager of the Leadville Ice and Coal Company, had been hired to supervise the ice cutting. He reported to Wood that because of the exceptionally moderate weather, ice on the Arkansas River and Turquoise Lake, near Leadville, was in short supply. It was agreed that Cole should send teams to Palmer Lake, north of Colorado Springs, for additional ice. This was a distance of more than 150 miles from Leadville.

In spite of the shortage of horses to make this long haul, the association managed to find twenty teams for which it paid $6 to $12 per day, their owners receiving 50c to 75c per ton of ice hauled. The teams averaged twelve tons a day.

"None of those stonecutters we hired to chop ice know what they're doing," Cole complained to Wood early in the construction.

"Suppose you try training them on the job," Wood advised.

After following his suggestion, Cole reported later, "Mr. Wood, they're just too slow." Wood hired Canadian woodcutters to replace them.

In addition to building the permanent portions of the castle, fifty-two carpenters in two shifts made forms in which doorways, window casings and blocks for the walls were cast.

After the ice had been hauled to the building site, it was trimmed and laid in the forms. These were then flooded with water, which froze, making the blocks uniform. When these blocks had been laid in the walls, water was poured over them; it froze and held them together like mortar. The walls of the palace were eight feet thick; blocks for other purposes were of varying dimensions.

Working around the clock to complete the job were from 250 to 350 laborers, carpenters and "ice masons." The latter received $2.50 to $3 a day; carpenters,

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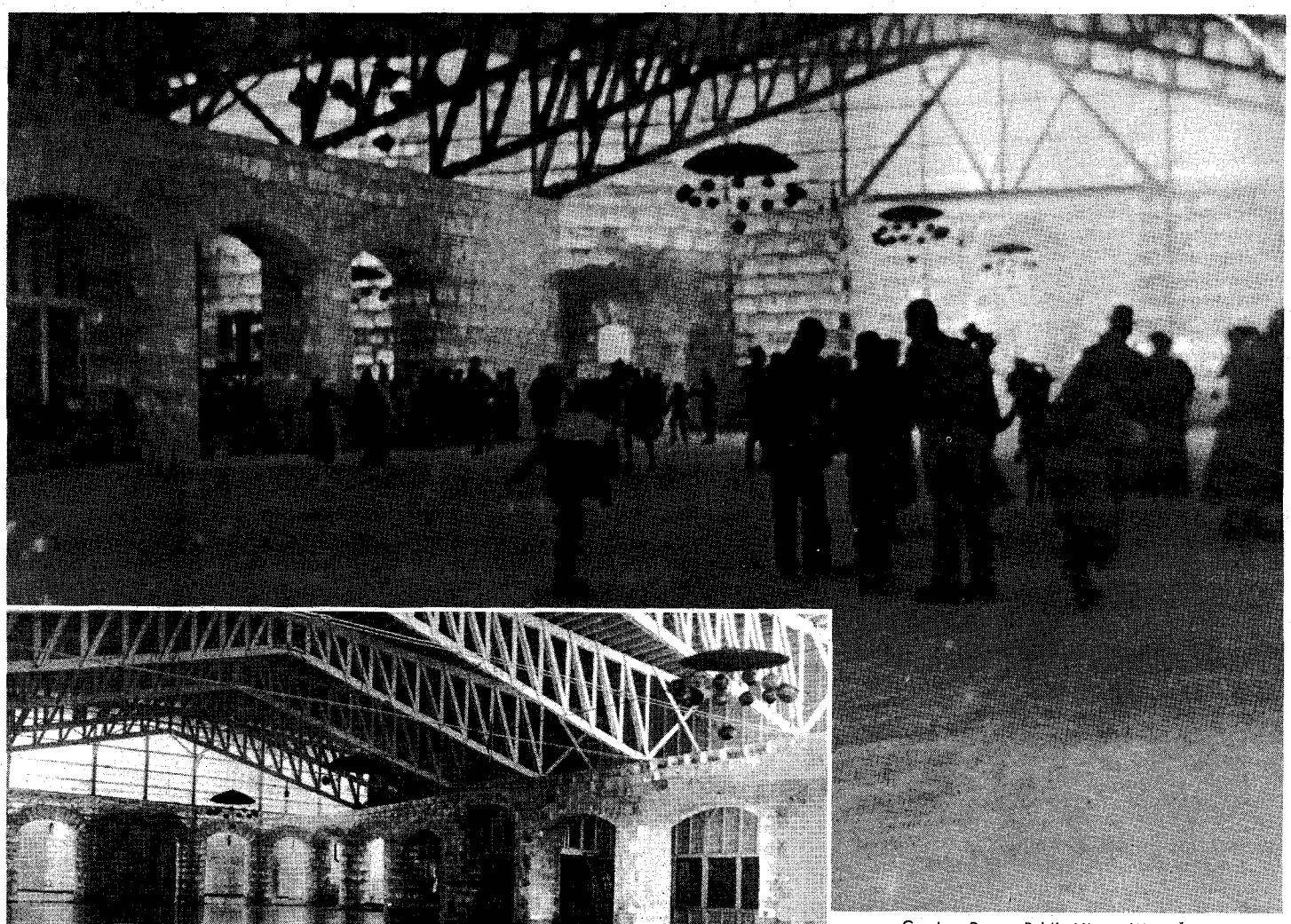

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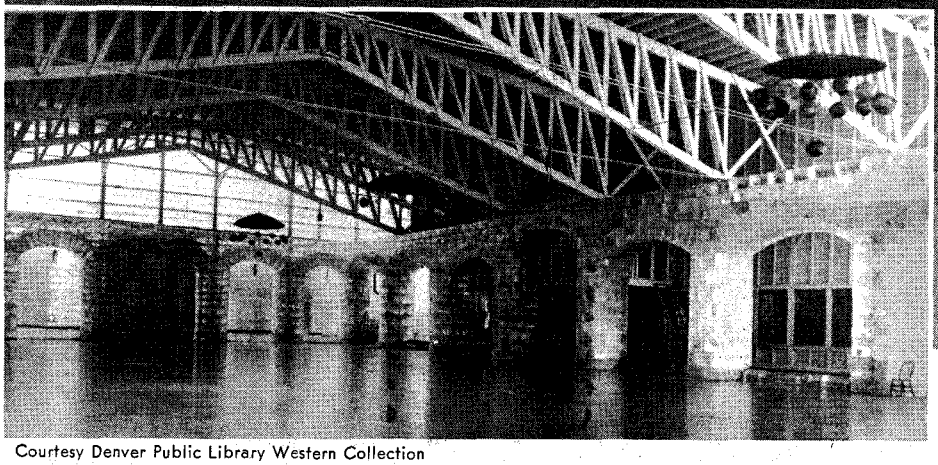

Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection

Two views of the Leadville Ice Palace's indoor skating rink.

$3 to $3.50; and common laborers drew $2.50. Actual construction began on December 1, and on December 15 the chinooks blew in.

"In that warm wind the ice melts faster than my men can lay it," W. W. Coble reported to the director general. "And the water used to seal the blocks won't freeze."

After pondering this problem, Wood suggested, "Let's get the fire department to spray the blocks at night. They'll freeze then!"

With this problem solved, Coble confronted Wood with another.

"Between the chinooks and the sun, the whole palace is beginning to melt," he pointed out.

The director general had to come up with a solution because the official opening of the ice palace was set for Christmas Day.

"Here's $5,000 of my own money," Wood told the finance chairman of the association's board of directors. "Buy 10,000 yards of muslin to shade the walls of the palace. We've got to keep that ice *from melting!*"

THE GINPOLE used to lift the blocks of ice broke and fell during the chinooks, and two workers were injured, one seriously. About the same time one of the north towers crumbled.

When cold weather finally set in again, temperatures plunged to 10, sometimes 20, degrees below at night, at which time the men repaired the palace and made additional blocks of ice.

By Christmas Day costs had risen to $60,000, and the palace was far from completed. In fact, it was unfinished when it was opened to the public on New Year's Day, 1896. The official gala opening with parade and appropriate ceremonies was not held until January 15.

By that time the glittering Leadville Ice Palace had reached magnificent proportions, with no indication of the battle which had been waged with the weather. The biggest, most expensive man-made pile of ice in the world sparkled in the winter sunlight. At night illuminated by hundreds of electric lights embedded in its walls, it glowed like a rare gem. Proud citizens agreed that, with Wood's help, Leadville had really outdone itself.

The main portion of the mammoth structure was 325 feet square. A south extension housing a merry-go-round, was 60x80 feet. At the end of the extension was an arch which spanned 27 feet over Seventh Street. A separate building of the same general architecture as the palace enclosed a riding gallery. Total length of the palace was 435 feet.

While the main towers were of irregular design, the north front towers were octagonal and rose 90 feet. They were 40 feet in diameter. Turrets decorated the eight corners of the octagon, along with battlements and panelings. The circular south towers were 60 feet high and 30 feet in diameter. The corner circular towers of the main building were 45 feet above the ground and 20 feet in diameter.

There were entrances on the south and east, and at the main north entrance stood "Leadville," an allegorical figure 19 feet high, on a 12-foot-tall pedestal. Her outstretched right arm and hand pointed to these hills from where the town's wealth had been taken. A scroll on the statue announced in raised gold figures that Leadville's total production of precious metals had been $200 million.

Admission to the palace was $1. Through the main entrance visitors went up the grand stairway into a foyer and on to a variety of amusements. This in itself was unique. The majority of ice palaces built before 1895 were only for the effect of the outer walls. A few had an enclosed skating rink, but as a rule, the only point of interest inside was an

(Continued on page 49)

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To My Tormentors, I Bequeath...

It wasn't a very satisfactory hanging. The victim wasn't properly contrite and to make it worse, he got buried in the "nice" part of the cemetery

By LARRY HOLDEN

Photos Courtesy Author

THE GALLOWS cast a short shadow. It was almost noon, April 27, 1877. James Edward Singleton stood on the scaffold waiting to be the second man ever hanged in Bee County, Texas.

Sunlight glinted off the shingles of the courthouse behind the hurriedly constructed platform and ricocheting rays sprinkled through the branches of a tree in the town square of Beeville, the county seat. The small crowd gathered to witness the execution was restless.

Sheriff David A. T. Walton asked if anyone knew how to tie a hangman's noose. No one stepped forward. Finally the condemned man, who had remained silent until then, said that he knew how to tie a noose. And so, in the role of his own executioner, James Singleton tied the hangman's knot, which was promptly placed around his neck. Sheriff Walton then offered a liberal sum to anyone who would cut the rope restraining the trap door of the gallows. No one accepted.

Singleton turned to the sheriff and said, "Goodbye, Mr. Walton." Upon uttering, "Goodbye, Mr. Holland," and "Goodbye, Mr. Tucker," to his guards, the rope was cut (apparently by Sheriff Walton) and Singleton was hanged. It was 11:30 in the morning.

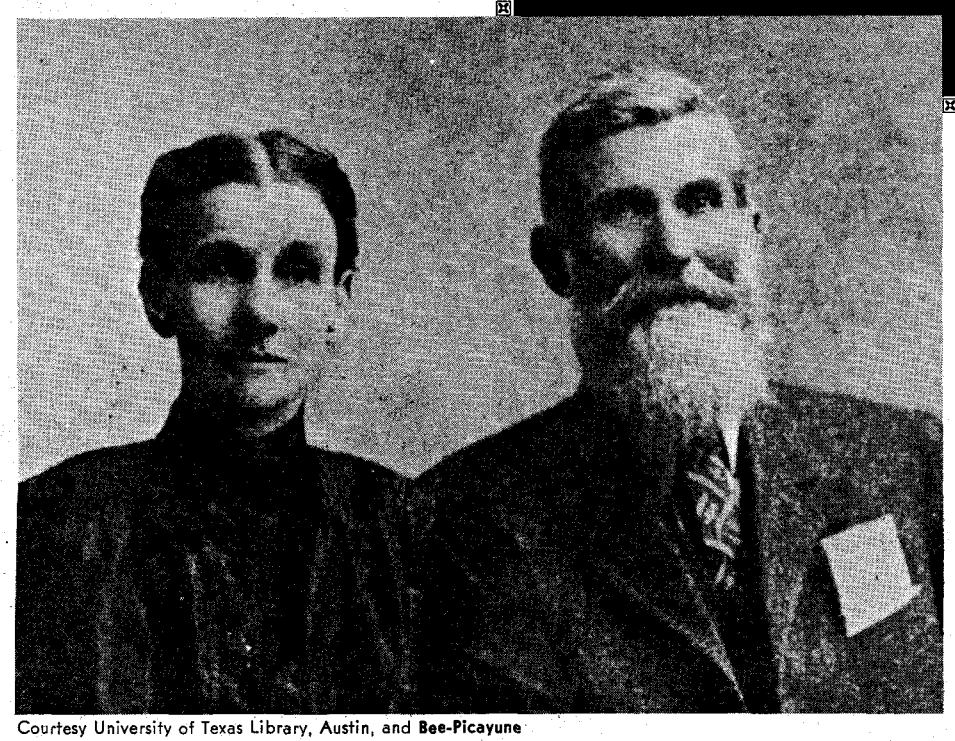
Only a few days before the execution, Singleton had penned one of the strangest wills on record. Sitting in the dampness of a jail cell in Galveston, Texas, he wrote (punctuation and spelling are Singleton's. Parts of the original will have been eaten away by silverfish, hence the missing words in several sentences):

"In the Name of the Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omnificient, of science and common sense Amen. I, J. E. Singleton (cosmopolite) Now sojourning in Galveston Jail, State of Texas, And, being of sound mind. Do by these present, Will, divise, and bequeath, (for the diffusion of anatomical knowledge among mankind)—my mortal remains to J. J. Swann, on the following conditions.

"First, that my body—after the execution—be prepared in the most scientific & skillful manner known in anatomical art, and placed in his Office, in the Court house in Beeville—O- - - - ter temple of Justice - - - - - - may - - - - - - - - - - -

"Second. It is my express desire—If Dave Walton has no objection—That two drumheads, be made of skin. On one of which shall be written in Indelable characters Popes universal prayer, & on the other the following Verdict, —

Sheriff and Mrs. David A. T. Walton.



Courtesy University of Texas Library, Austin, and **Bee-Picayune**

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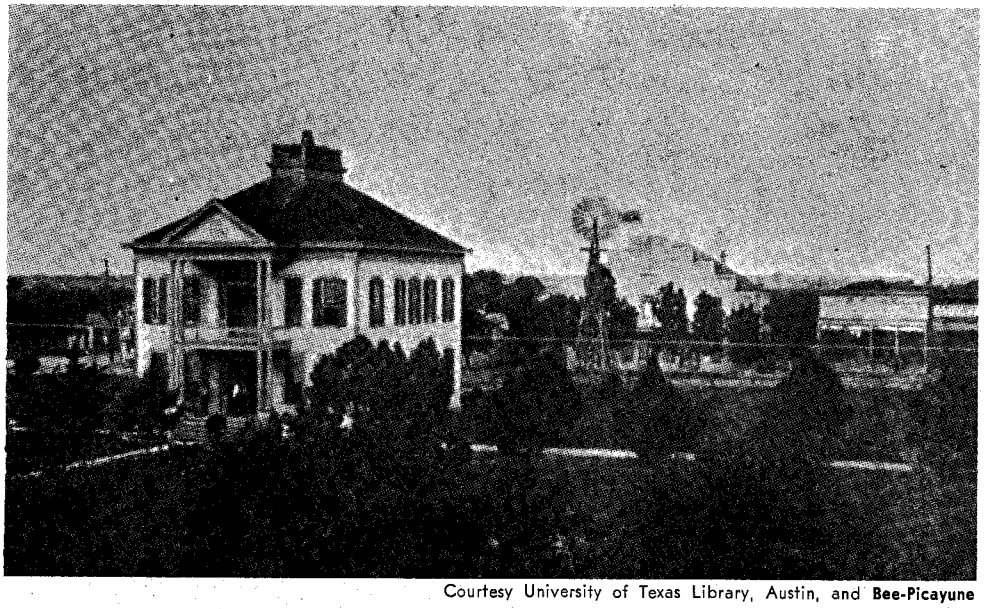


Courtesy University of Texas Library, Austin, and Bee-Picayune

Second Bee County Courthouse, 1879-1912.

"We, the Jury, find the defendant, Jas. W. Singleton, guilty of murder in the first degree, as charged in the Indictment and assess the penalty of death.

"The said drum heads to be presented to my distinguished friend and fellow-citizen, Frank Boggus—drummer for Tom Holly's division—On the following conditions that He, the aforesaid Frank Boggus, shall beat, or cause to be beaten on said drum heads, the popular tune --------- front ------- on the 8th day of June Annually.

"The viscera, and other parts of my body, useless for anatomical purposes, I wish composted for a fertilizer, and presented to Mr. Barclay, proprietor of the Grand Palace Hotel, in Beeville, to be used by him for the purpose of nourishing the growth of cabbage, turnips, pertaters, and other garden sass, that the worthy people of Bee County—or at least the masculine portion thereof—may have something to relieve the monotony of hash & dried apples, during their brief sojourn at the aforesaid Hotel, while assembled at Beeville, for the purpose of dishing out Justice to Violators of the Law.

J. E. Singleton.

"The foregoing is my last will and testement, and I wish J. J. Swann to act as Executor. I feel very grateful to the Citizens of Bee County in general, and to J. J. Swann in particular for the many favors conferred upon me by them. I also feel that I am indebted to them, to some extent pecuiniarily, and being at present in Indigent circumstances, I write and leave this will, alike to liquidate my debts, and prove my gratitude."

DOWN THROUGH the years, excerpts from Singleton's will have often appeared in print. J. Frank Dobie included an account of the incident written by John Young, a deputy for Sheriff Walton and one of the guards who accompanied Singleton to Galveston, in his book, *A Vaquero of the Brush Country*.

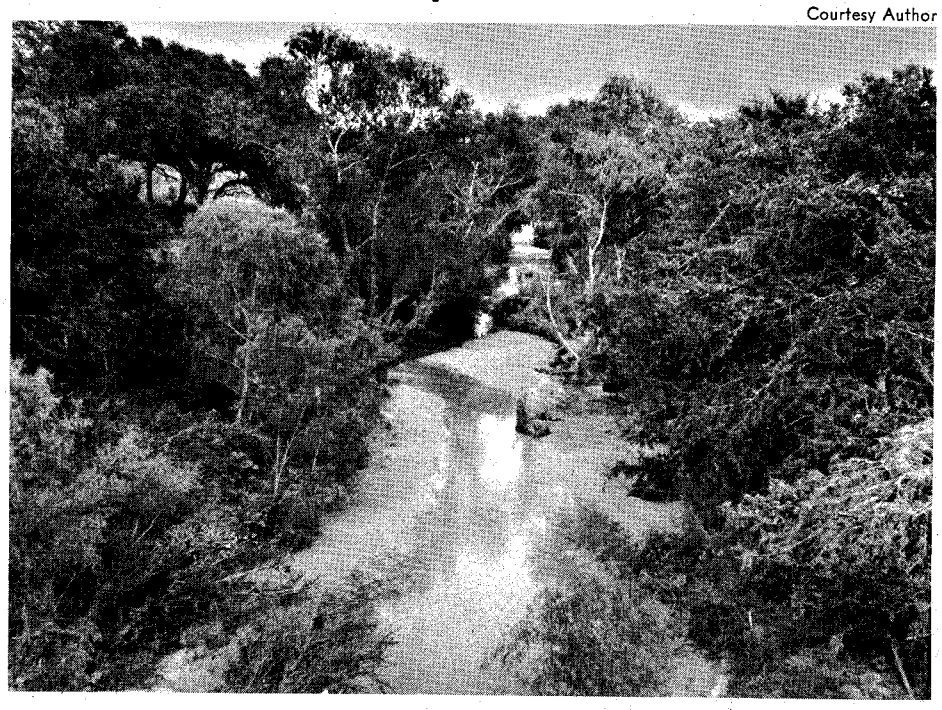
Commenting on the weird document, Young noted that "Finally he made out a most peculiar will, to which the press gave wide publicity. In it he bequeathed his skin to the district attorney, J. J. Swan, who had prosecuted him, directing that it be stretched over a drumhead and that the drum be beaten, to the tune of 'Old Mollie Hare,' in front of the courthouse every year . . . 'as a warning to evil doers.' The remainder of his anatomy he bequeathed to the doctors, 'in the cause of science'."

THERE IS no evidence that Singleton's wishes, as expressed in the will, were carried out. The probability is that they were not. There is, however, evidence of a discrepancy in describing Singleton's character. Young refers to both Singleton and the man he murdered, John C. Dwyer, as "two of the bad men hanging about town." In a history of Bee County written in 1939, Mrs. I. C. Madray, a lifelong resident of Beeville, wrote that "The story of the Singleton hanging records a sad page in the county's history. He was a

(Continued on page 47)

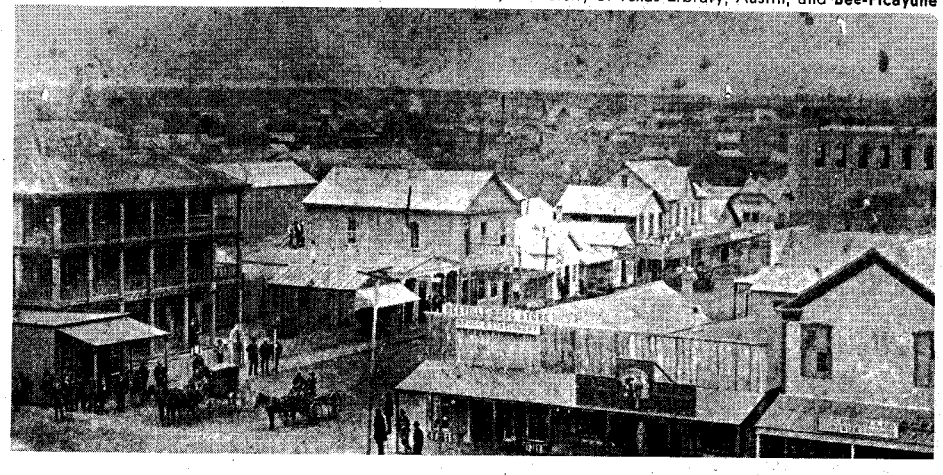
Below, Aransas Creek, eight miles south of Beeville, where Singleton was hidden by the law.

Courtesy Author



Below, the town of Beeville in the early 1890s, photo looking west, taken from the courthouse.

Courtesy University of Texas Library, Austin, and Bee-Picayune



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Author's note: Charlie Siringo spent the summer of 1917 at the Frank Coe ranch on the Ruidoso. Helena Coe LeMay, daughter of Frank, tells of their meeting and of his visit at the homes of her father and her sister, Mrs. Bert Bonnell.

Frank Coe's daughter reminisces about a few summer days a long time ago when a silent man and a disdainful dog spun her young girl's imagination like a top!

Charlie Siringo and

"WE HAD SPENT the winter in Roswell where my mother took us children each year so that we might attend school. Our summers were spent on the ranch on the Ruidoso which we loved and hated leaving.

"A day or so after getting home I took Old Slim, my horse, for a workout which he needed badly. I decided to go to the post office in the store of my Uncle Jim Tully. The road led up and across a mesa and was a shortcut which saved almost a half-mile.

"I was letting Old Slim go in order to take some of the kinks out when I first saw a horsebacker coming up the mesa on the Eagle Creek trail. As he came closer I could see he was leading a horse and that there was an animal following it.

"Ordinarily I recognized anyone using that trail because there were no ranches up that way until one reached the Fort Stanton pasture, so I knew it was either a cowboy from a neighboring ranch or one of Uncle Jim's sons. As the rider approached I saw that he had a pack horse but I could not identify the animal behind it. A colt? It was large enough for that, but cowboys don't ride mares.

"Old Slim, too, was watching the approach of the traveler and did not approve it. The closer we got the more unhappy he became and I had difficulty both in holding him on the trail and keeping my seat.

"When we came within hailing distance I saw that the straggler was an enormous dog, a Russian wolfhound, and a magnificent animal. The rider touched his hat and said 'Howdy, Miss, I'm Charlie Siringo. I'm looking for the Frank Coe ranch. Can you tell me where it is?'

"Charlie Siringo—the name meant nothing to me. But I could hardly answer for looking at the man's clothing. He wore a huge Stetson with a rattlesnake-skin band. His neckerchief was of brilliant red silk. His blue chambray shirt was visible under a leather vest, fringed at waist and pockets. His chaps glittered with silver conchos and the holster of his pistol was of tooled leather and fastened with a massive silver buckle. What I could see of his boot was black and shiny but most of it was hidden by a huge *tapadero*. His spur was of silver with a very small rowel.

"His saddle, also tooled, had silver conchos and was so new that it creaked with the movements of his horse. The bridle was tooled and had a fringe two inches wide on the brow. The bits were silver and the shafts were patterned in what was known as the "gal leg" design.

"The stranger's saddle blanket was a beautiful Navajo with red and black designs on a white background. Under it was a fine bay horse, weary but in good condition. I noticed that the pack on the lead horse was fastened securely with a diamond hitch that only the practiced can tie.

"AS WE STOPPED, the dog moved up to the rider's stirrup and watched me. In our country a wolfhound was a rare sight.

"Mr. Siringo had repeated his question before I replied that the Coe ranch was the first as he went off the mesa. It was about a mile away and the top of the big red barn would be visible.

" 'I see. Do you know if Frank Coe is at home?'

" 'Yes, sir,' I replied. 'I'm his daughter. He was at the house when I left.'

" 'Glad to know you, Miss. I'll ride on. Perhaps I can catch your father before he leaves.'

" 'I'll ride back with you.'

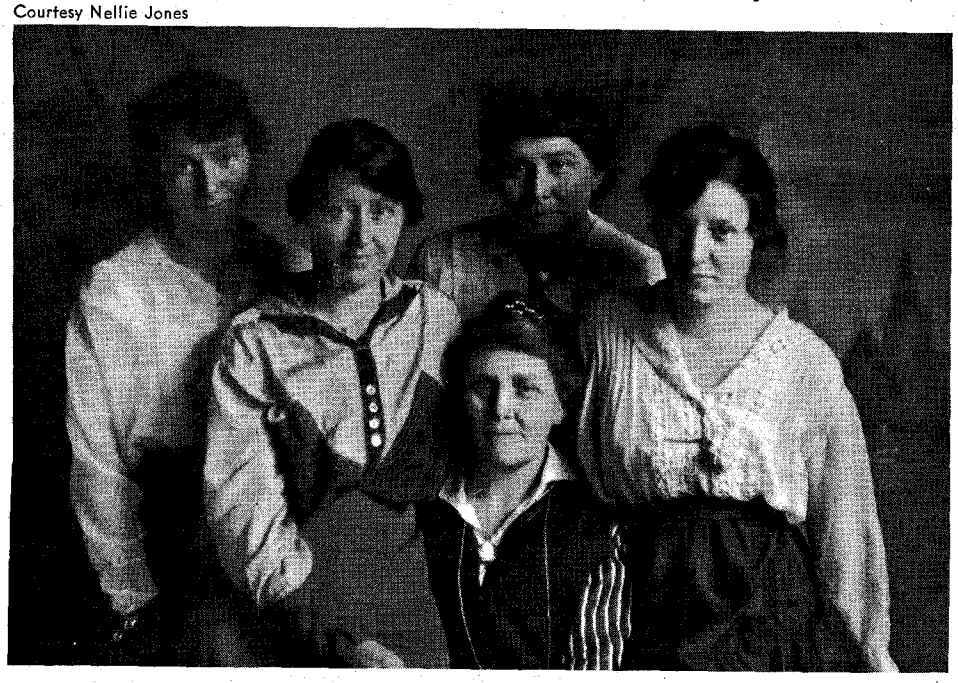
" 'That's unnecessary, but I thank you.' "

Siringo's refusing her escort to the house aroused the curiosity of Helena Coe but she continued on her way. As she rode she wondered about the purpose of his trip. He was no cowboy looking for a job. What did the man want? No bronc buster would have used those rowels. He looked a bit like some of the Easterners who came to vacation at the Bonnell ranch during the summer, but none of them ever arrived on a horse. Not one would know a diamond from a half hitch. Moreover, had Bonnell's been his destination he would not have turned off the trail toward her home.

Helena said, "I gave Old Slim his head and he went on to the post office where Uncle Jim wanted to hear the news from home. I told what I knew and went to the house to see Grandmother. Getting away from her was not easy for she, too, wanted news of the community and she wanted *detailed* information. Ordinarily I'd have sampled the candy in Uncle Jim's little store and emptied Grandmother's cookie jar but that day I had no time for either. I tied the mail on the saddle and struck a lope for home. On the way I stopped at Bonnell's to ask if they'd seen the stranger but they had not.

Helena Coe sits surrounded by her daughters. Left to right: Edith Coe Rigsby, Anne Coe Titsworth, Sydney Coe Bonnell and Helena Coe LeMay.

Courtesy Nellie Jones



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By EVE BALL

Photos Courtesy Author

Courtesy Mrs. Raymond W. Thorp

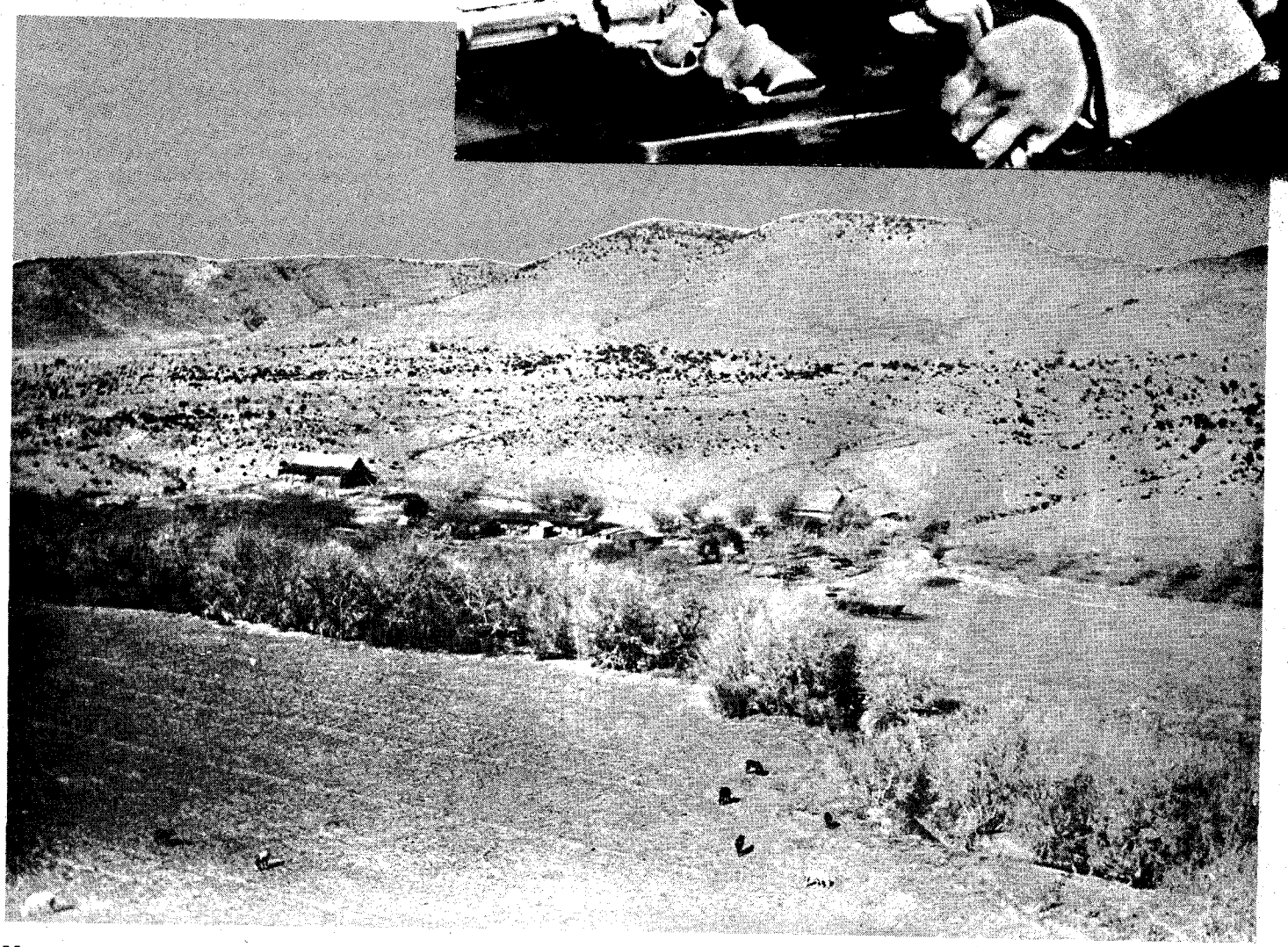
Charlie Siringo in a photo taken shortly after his retirement from twenty-two years as a detective.

"Eat Em Up Jake"

"Before I got in sight of the ranch I slowed down. Dad did not approve of running a horse except for heading stock. I could see two mounts at the hitching rack by the front gate and when I rode up and tied mine, Dad and the stranger were sitting out in the yard in the shade of the big cottonwoods. Dad was whittling. That meant that the conversation was interesting.

(Continued on page 46)

The Coe Ranch from the mesa north of the ranch house looking south.



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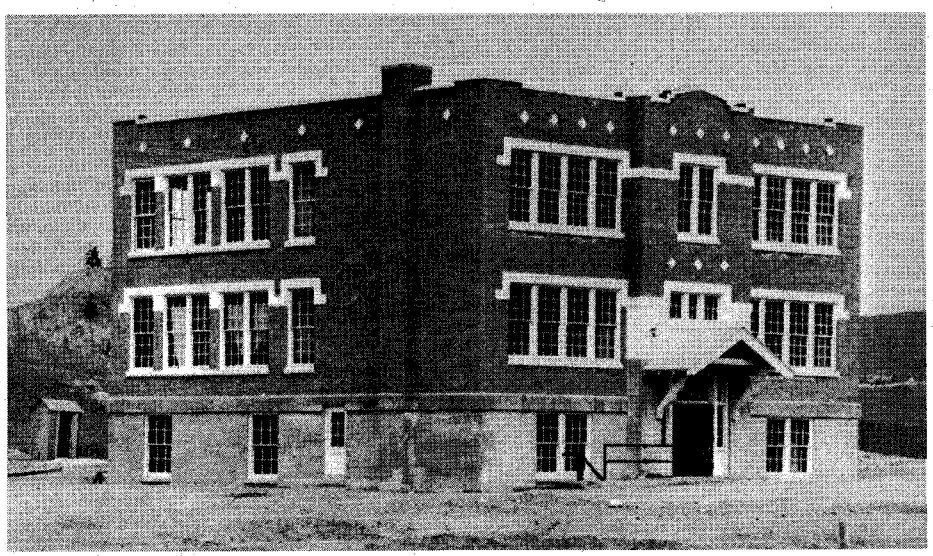
Courtesy Sherling Collection

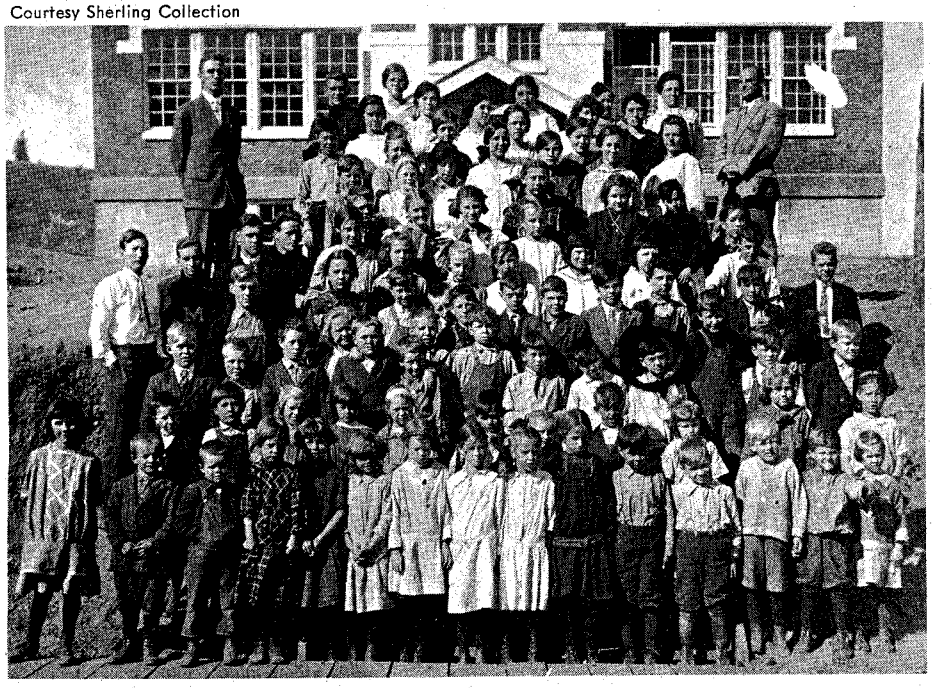
The Potter Mercantile Company, later known as the Molson Trading Company.



Courtesy Sherling Collection

Above, the Molson, Washington school, built in 1914-15. Its first class (shown below) was in September 1916. The author is circled.

Courtesy Sherling Collection



Wild

OLD MOLSON

By Leonard H. Boucher

MOLSON, Washington, located in the northeastern corner of the state, 1½ miles south of the Canadian border, was once a prosperous little city of 500 souls. It could have been a metropolis except for the whim of Mother Nature.

I lived in or near Molson for many years and have many memories of the nice little town that lived, prospered and died, all within a period of forty years.

The hub of mining and farming interests, Molson was started in 1898 by George B. Meacham, a mining promoter with interests in the Poland China Mine. He, along with a number of associates, formed a company of sorts and began erecting some buildings. Before long 200 persons were contributing to the economy of our fast growing municipality. Housing was at a premium, and Molson virtually became a city of tents. Ironically, the town was named for John W. Molson, a Canadian businessman who had mining interests in the area but who, as far as is known, had never set foot on any of his Molson holdings.

During its heyday, and with an area of around two square miles, Molson had an imposing array of business houses. I doubt very much that any town in the Northwest, of comparable size, could match these totals. Any town with a present ghost status, that is. Most of the following businesses I remember; some were gleaned from the memories of my elders: Four banks, eight saloons, three post office locations, five general or mercantile stores, (Nash General, Potter Mercantile, Molson Mercantile, Dunlap Department Store, Diamond General).

Of stores that stocked only groceries, there were three: McCoy's, Wilson's, and Ben Prince. Later on, Wilson's Grocery stocked school supplies and miscellaneous items. There were many butcher shops. The ones I remember are McGraw's, Otto Remke, and Cederbloom. We also had two lumber yards. The town was served by five hotels: The Molson, the Imperial, the Wallace, the Tonasket, the Russell. All were destroyed by fire at one time or another, with the exception of the Russell which operated until 1940.

In addition to these there were many smaller business houses, no less important to us. A furniture store, several millinery shops, three harness shops, a flour mill, three livery stables, several barber shops and pool halls. Three medical doctors lived in Molson—Tyler, Efner, and Beale. There were also six doctors of veterinary medicine—Neal, Thayer, Jaeggers, Richmond, Nelson, and Tripp.

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Old Days!

The Eaton and Dunn were our theatres, and the McGraw, Boucher, and Dimmitt our restaurants. Water was supplied from privately owned wells. The well directly behind my restaurant supplied water for two other businesses besides mine.

Electric power was available but limited in quantity. Most families used lamps. The Great Northern Railroad ran daily passenger trains through the town; mines and sawmills dotted the outlying areas, and grain farming was extensive.

THE DECLINE of Molson started about 1922. We had a severe drought which lasted for several years. Crop after crop failed. Then mines petered out, and Potter's sawmill, the largest in the area, folded up and moved out. Farmers striving to keep their heads above water mortgaged their lands to the hilt. When these funds were exhausted they moved away, leaving the banks and land companies with thousands of acres of farm land on their hands. Men who had been employed on these farms were laid off and, having no other means of income, packed up their worldly goods and moved on to other locations, as did the mine and sawmill workers.

The Great Northern tore up its tracks in 1927, leaving Molson without any means of transportation. By 1940 all semblance of a town had disappeared. When I last visited there in 1951, only four buildings were left. Where the Wallace Hotel had stood, a private home had been built. The other three structures were the Dunlap Store building, the Molson Mercantile building, and the school. The Molson Mercantile building is now being used as a Grange Hall. I tried to find the remains of some of the other buildings, but even the foundations had disappeared. All had been razed and the lumber hauled away.

I parked my car across the street from the school, directly in front of the lot on which my restaurant had once stood, rested my head on the back of the car seat, and let my mind drift back into the past. As I closed my eyes, I could see myself as a child of ten, playing in the yard of a brand new school that had been built in 1915, and in which I was a charter student. As this image faded away, I could see myself as a young adult riding down the street on Kitty, my little black mare. People from all walks of life were waving to me from the street or from their places of business. Tied to hitching racks were saddle ponies and work teams awaiting the return of their owners. Standing hip-shot with heads hanging low, they paid scant attention to my approach.

Shifting my weight in the saddle I eagerly scanned the faces before me hoping to find a familiar one, but it was hopeless. Every one was a blank. I jerked around in the saddle as the shrill whistle of a locomotive engine penetrated my senses. People were hurrying to the depot to watch the train come in. Not wishing to miss the fun, I pricked Kitty lightly with the spurs, and headed her in the direction of the depot. Looking back, I can't remember why meeting the train was so much fun, but it must have been, because most everyone who could make it would be there.

The excitement was always short-lived for there was very little business to be taken care of aside from two or three passengers getting off or on, and the mail to be picked up by the postmaster. Too quickly it was over. A voice called, "All aboard," and the train slowly started to move away from the station—moving faster and faster as the engineer pushed forward on the throttle. I used to watch until the last coach faded from my sight, then turn my pony toward home and slowly ride away.

At this point my mind drew a blank. Try as I would, I could not conjure up more mental images, so I opened my eyes and looked about. What met my gaze almost made me close my eyes again, for all about me were acres and acres of grain, growing right to the street's edge.

I started my car, and drove slowly through what was left of Molson, Washington. The silence was awesome. No friendly voices called to me as I passed by. No friendly hands were raised to greet me. All were gone. Gone forever, never to return. All that is left of this once prosperous little town is emptiness. And for a moment, do you know what I felt like? A ghost!

MONEY IN BREAD DOUGH

By R. A. Sutliff

IN THE 1880s Nathaniel S. Harrold, a well-to-do California wheat rancher, hired two Chinese cooks, one for his family and one for the ranch hands. As he only paid them fifteen dollars a month, he didn't get much "cook" but two very slick China boys.

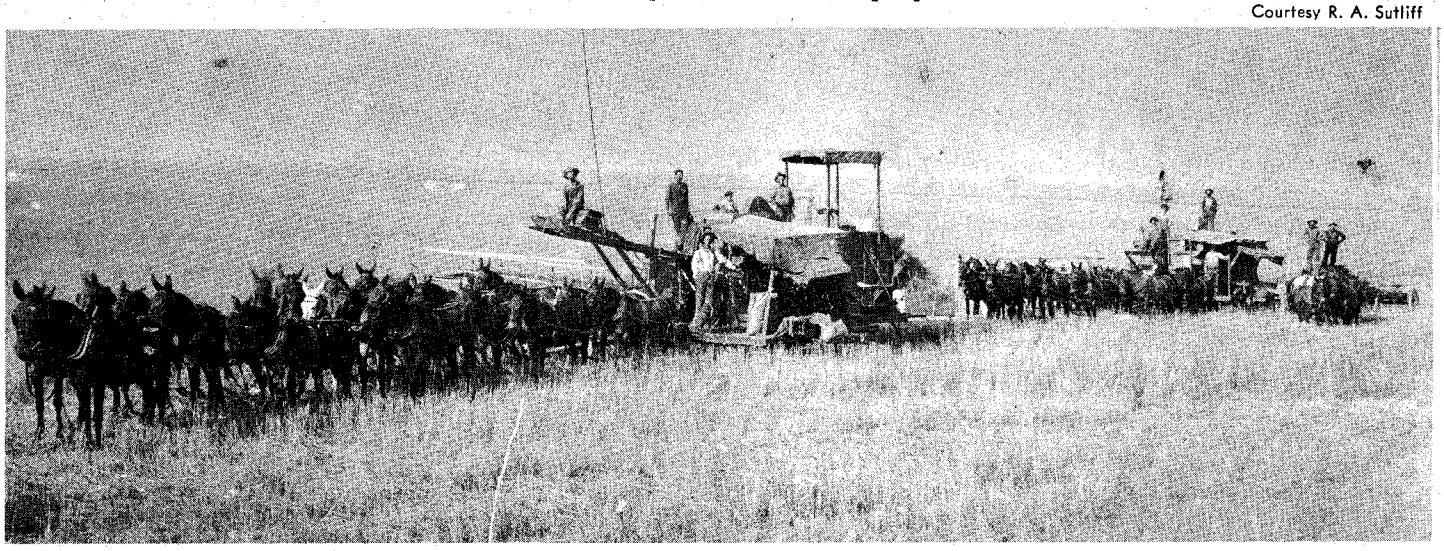
Nate, when he needed money for the ranch, was in the habit of going to Oakdale to the Haslaker and Kohn Bank where he had a large account. He always took along in his spring wagon a black, iron-covered kettle which he used for that purpose only. After he got his money home safely he always turned it over to his wife who placed the kettle in the milk cooler. Nate had picked up $600 in gold and silver on this trip and followed the usual procedure.

Along in the fall of that year the two cooks decided to quit and go to Stockton. When Nate went to get the money to pay

(Continued on page 66)

Threshers on John Owens Ranch on the western Stanislaus County line, California, 1899. Left, a Holt combine. Right, a Harvest Queen built by "Daniel Best" Company.

Courtesy R. A. Sutliff



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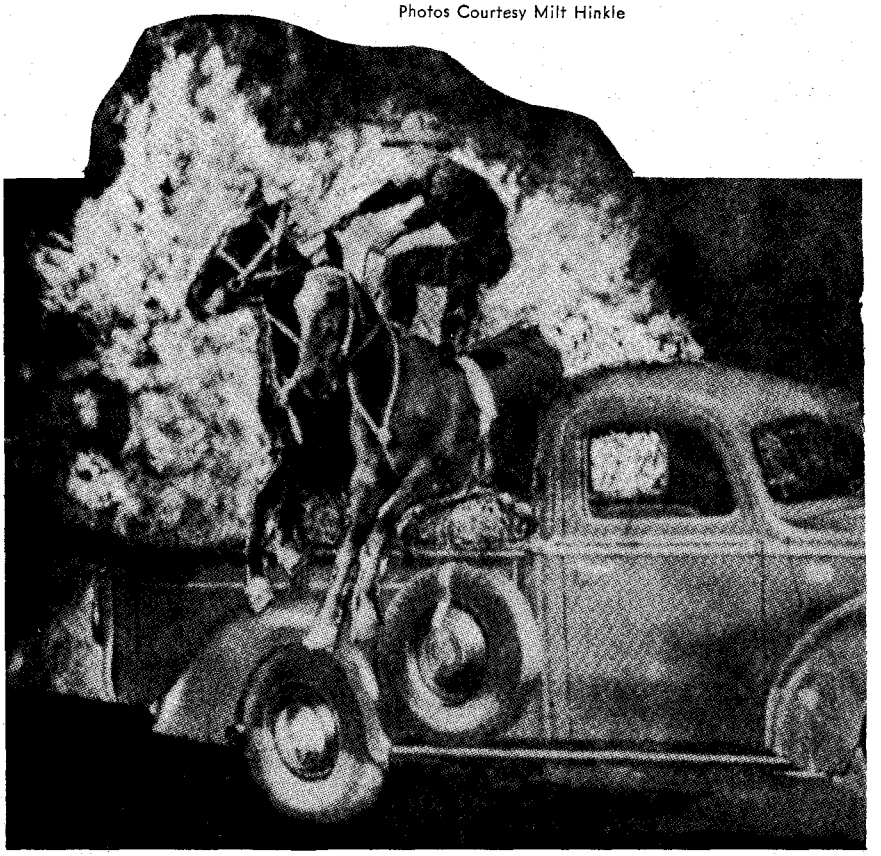
derstood what a good horse could do and what a good rider could do. Sometimes this added up to more than his audience could believe possible, so they tagged him

"SUICIDE TED" ELDER

By MILT HINKLE and MILDRED ELDER

Photos Courtesy Milt Hinkle



FOG HORN Clancy once wrote, "In the tempo of American Life and the rodeo as it is today we win temporary fame, we star, we are acclaimed by untold thousands, we retire or pass on, and are soon forgotten. . . .

"We move so fast that it seems we do not have time to remember those who were great, those who added much to the progress of the very business from which we gain our livelihood."

He was talking about Ted Elder, one of the most daring horsemen who ever lived.

Ted, for seven years holder of the title "Champion Trick Rider of the World," was born October 9, 1897 in Hinckley, Utah, the son of Jonathan and Bertha Ann Dewsnup Elder. The family moved to Alberta, Canada, when Ted was about four years old, and his boyhood was spent on a homestead ranch.

Ted was born with an instinctive love of animals, especially horses, and so upon reaching military age, he and his brother Clarence joined the Northwest Mounted Police. When World War I came along, the two brothers, seeing little or no chance of getting overseas, left the Mounties and joined the unit known as Lord Strathcona's Horse Cavalry. Shortly afterward, just as they were within three weeks of being sent overseas, the armistice was signed, leaving the young adventurers high and dry in Canada, when in their courageous hearts they wanted to be in France chasing the Germans.

About eight months later they were back in Alberta, helping on their father's ranch again, but this was too tame for Ted. He had seen the outside world. He left home intending to go to South America. This he figured would give him a

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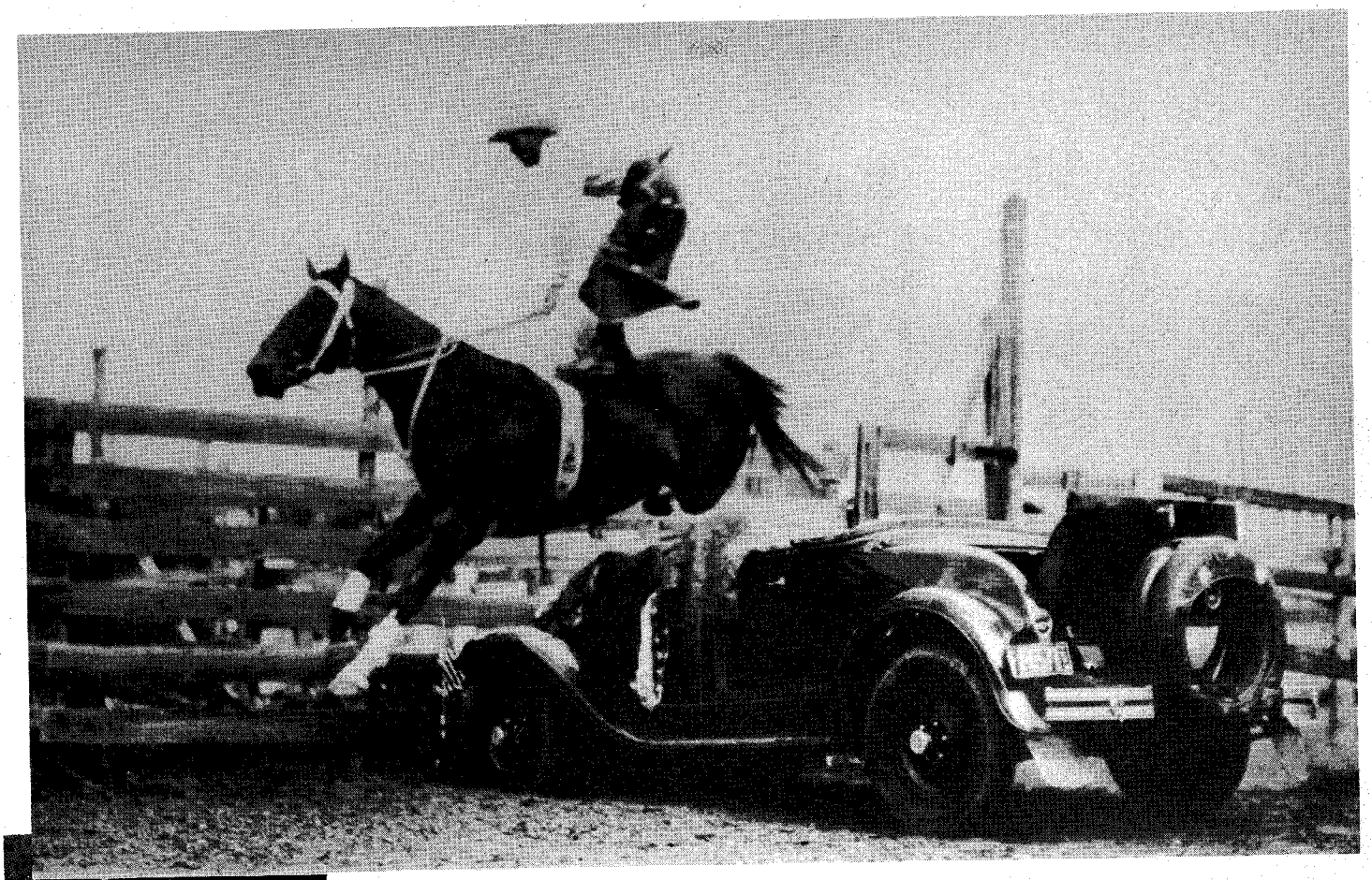

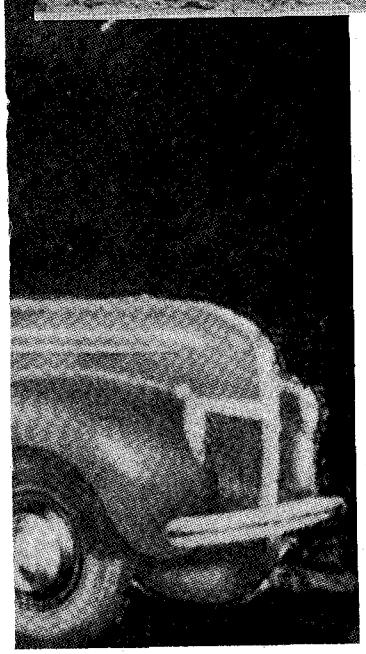

Elder performing for the 101 Ranch Show made the jump standing on only one horse which was more dangerous than using two (left).

chance to learn the Spanish language, which he very much wanted to do. To earn money to pay his passage he worked on the docks of Seattle, Washington. He worked during the day and went to school at night.

One day, while walking down the street, Ted noticed a picture on a billboard. It was a cowboy on a bucking bronc, advertising the Pendleton, Oregon Roundup. Quickly making a decision that was to influence the rest of his life and without going back to the docks to collect his pay, he caught the first freight train headed for Pendleton. Rodeos and similar work were to be his life for many years to come.

GETTING A JOB on a ranch near Pendleton, he broke horses and gentled them for others to ride in the next "Roundup." Ted himself was ready, or he thought he was. At the try-out, he got aboard a really wild one owned by C. B. Irwin of Wyoming.

Ted's first venture was a sight to see. He held on until the pick-up man came to his rescue. The horse was named Lightning Creek, and for a time Ted thought "lightning" had struck him on all four sides. Even so, he wasn't discouraged. Getting up from his first spill and dusting off his chaps with his hat, he climbed on I-B-Dam, another top horse belonging to Mr. Irwin. The greenhorn cowboy didn't last long, for I-B-Dam let him have every trick he knew. Ted fell off and landed on his own two feet in the rear of the bucking horse, flying hoofs just missing his head by inches. I-B-Dam whirled, twisted and bucked. This was the first time an Association Saddle was used. The year was 1920.

On that same day, Ted rode in the Wild Horse Race, and was confident he knew all about horses, but as all cowboys know, a "wild horse" bucks differently from one trained to buck. For the first time in his life Ted Elder stayed in bed the next day until noon, every muscle and bone aching and crying for help. He was sore all over, but still game.

Will Byers came into his life about this time. Will had show stock, chariot racing and Pony Express horses. He hired Ted to go on a circuit from Marshalltown, Iowa back to Pendleton, Oregon. Ted had learned to ride by this time—trick riding, using a surcingle, doing stunts such as shoulder stands, vaults and many others. From this he got a start in rodeo.

Fog Horn Clancy was in Perry, Iowa, putting on a rodeo for three days, and using Byers' stock. Ted rode in competition with some of the best. He rode in the Roman races, chariot races and also performed some original stunts he had originated. How beautiful it was to see, for all of Byers' horses were cream-colored with pure white manes and tails.

Ted did not have a saddle of his own but knowing he would have to get one eventually, he went to a nearby livery stable and had one remade for his own particular act. Soon he was well on his way to becoming the Champion Trick Rider of the World, which title he held seven times.

After being with rodeos all summer, completing a full season, Ted went to Horse Creek, Wyoming to winter with C. B. Irwin. In the spring, they opened in Cheyenne. This was the first time he had a bona fide contract to use his trick saddle.

Later this same year, he appeared at the Calgary Stampede and won the trophy which had been given by Mary Pickford, the famous movie star, for the Roman race. In this race the rider stands on two horses, balancing himself on their

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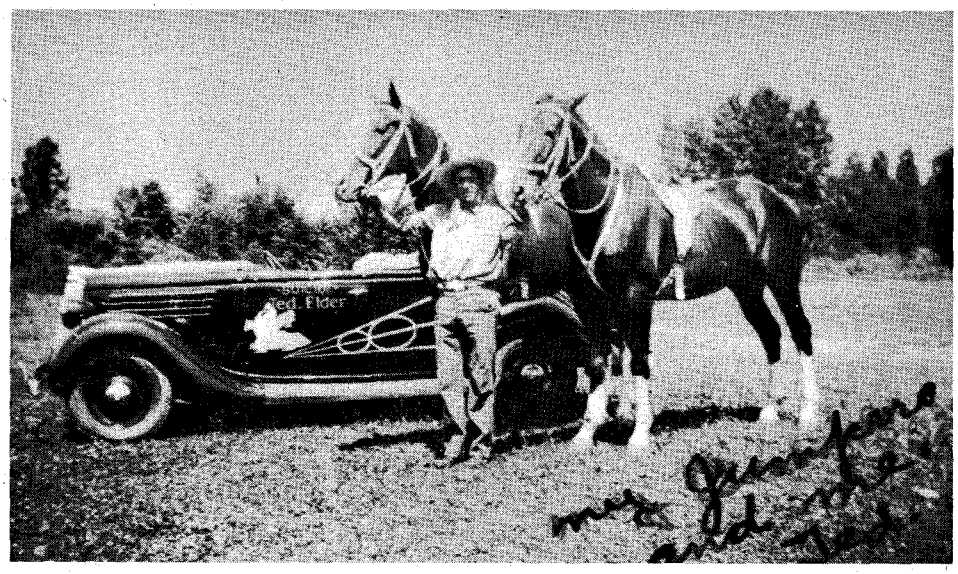

bare backs with only the reins to hold him steadily aloft.

After several engagements, Ted went to Bozeman, Montana, and thereafter to Denver, Colorado. In Denver he won his first championship. This was followed by a trip to England, where he took second place, losing to Tommy Kiernan, on points.

IN 1925 Ted joined the Ringling Brothers Barnum & Bailey Circus. On this show he got the polishing he needed and became the featured star. He told John Ringling that he wanted very much to go back to Madison Square Garden in New York to try for another championship, and Ringling was enthusiastic about it. He offered Ted the horse he had used in the circus. In fact, the head of the "Greatest Show on Earth" not only sent this horse by special baggage car to New York, but upon its arrival there had it met by six beautifully matched grays pulling an ornate circus wagon. Ted's horse was placed inside, and regally rode the streets of New York as if he were the "King" of horses which indeed he was. It was only a one-wagon parade, but the sophisticated New Yorkers gaped and realized that something new had come to town.

For two weeks this horse went through the tricks he had learned so well from his master, and at last the final day of the engagement arrived. It is customary on closing day for the riders to compete for the championship. They draw lots and then go into the arena in rotation, performing their own individual tricks, which the one following must perform in addition to his own—and the one following must do this successfully or be automatically eliminated from the contest. When several men are competing this can add up to quite a lot to master, and Ted was far down on the list. He had to do everything that had been done before his entry and then he performed his own special act.

The man Ted followed into the arena was a champion in his own right, but Ted managed to do everything the champion had done. Then, bracing himself for the finale, the champion and Ted did five runs around the arena, doing all of the other competitors' tricks and then adding his own specialty at top speed. Ted's trick consisted of turning backward in the saddle, diving down between the horse's hind legs, passing the turn, and then flipping back over into the saddle facing forward.

The crowd went wild and the other cowboys cheered Ted as they had never cheered before. Buck Stewart, the champion, tried twice to do this trick and failed both times. Ted showed his sportsmanship by going out to Stewart in the ring and showing him how to fix his saddle strings so that he might do the trick. But Stewart could not complete the crucial turn and rode out of the arena, leaving the championship of the year 1926 to "Suicide Ted."

It is said the cowboy got that title because a woman in the stands, growing hysterical, rose to her feet and screamed, "What is he trying to do—commit suicide?" And that name has stuck ever since.

Ted held his championship for seven years, retiring undefeated.

LEAVING Ringling Brothers Circus and the contests behind, he signed on with the 101 Ranch Show. It was during this time that he broke and trained two beautiful Irish Hunter horses to jump over an automobile while he stood on their backs Roman style. Before the season was over, one of the Hunters became crippled, and Ted, in order to hold his contract, went to Zack Miller and offered to do the act with only one horse. Though the act was much more dangerous with one horse than two, it being more difficult to keep one's balance, Colonel Miller consented, saying, "If you can do it, the contract stands."

Ted was aware that he might have a bad spill, and arranged for a load of sawdust to be placed where he could land in case of a fall. For six weeks, twice a day, he took a tumble.

Striving for perfection, Ted had pictures taken to pinpoint his mistake. He found that as his horse made the jump, the horse's body rolled to one side throwing Ted off balance. Once this was rectified, the act was perfected. When the crippled horse recovered, Ted used two horses again.

During the off-season, he taught the horses a new stunt. He soaked burlap bags in gasoline and taught them to jump over the automobile as flames and smoke rose to the top of the arena. All summer long he practiced this act. His patience was finally rewarded and, as far as it is known, no other performer ever attempted this trick. Many have used various obstacles, but training an animal to overcome its natural fear of fire is not easy.

One particular night the house was packed. During the act one horse slipped a little and fell into the car. He was thrashing to get out, but couldn't. Ted thought the horse was going to roll over him, so he crawled under the car. The horse knocked off the windshield, both doors and the steering wheel, and laid back the front seat—and then went runing to the gate where he had been accustomed to going out.

The audience thought Ted had been killed by the horse. When he crawled out from under the car, the people stood and gave him one of the biggest ovations of his career. They were so glad he was alive.

IN 1932 with Cy Compton, Ted went on a tour of Sweden, Denmark, Belgium, Holland and France. He was acclaimed and applauded everywhere, performing before royalty in some of these countries. But Ted Elder took it all in stride—it was the show, not its viewers, which gave him his greatest happiness. If he could add a thrill to the performance with his skill and audacity he was satisfied. It has been said he could walk with kings and remain humble—and that is true.

Ted has a wry sense of humor. Once

(Continued on page 72)

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If you have information concerning persons referred to below, do not write to us. Communicate directly with the letter writer.

The Rev. Pleasant Tackitt (Tackett)

I am trying to trace the background of the Rev. Pleasant Tackitt (or Tackett) who was born in Kentucky near Louisville on April 22, 1803. His parents Lewis and Elizabeth (Bashum) Tackitt moved to Missouri and the Rev. Tackitt was appointed by the Missouri Conference to Arkansas in 1830 as a missionary to the Indians. He married Kesia Bruton (or Brewton) in Pope County, Arkansas in 1830. In 1854 he came to Texas and settled first in Parker County, later in Young County.

The only relative of his that I know anything about was a brother, Mann Darius Tackitt, who settled in Jack County near the present town of Jacksboro. He was my great-great-grandfather and I am hoping to find some of his relatives or their descendants who can help me trace farther back in his background. I know very little about him before he came to Texas except that he was licensed to be a Methodist minister about 1826 and served as missionary to the Indians.—Mrs. Howard K. Williams, 302 North Henderson, Rusk, Texas 75785

Martin McAnnelly-Tom Mays-Smith

I am seeking information about the children or grandchildren of Martin McAnnelly who married Mary Smith, daughter of Moses Howell Smith and Cynthia E. Jones Smith of Guadalupe County, Texas. Originally from Fayette County, Alabama, in 1854 they migrated to Texas. Martin and Mary lived for a time at Flatonia, Texas. Tom Mays of Bastrop, Texas married Catherine (Kate) Smith Hall, sister of Mary Smith. Catherine and Mary had brothers: Wiley Marshall, George Washington, Daniel Franklin, Isaac Newton, Anderson (Andy) Smith and also a sister named Sarah or Sally. Most of these people lived at or close to Luling, Lockhart and Seguin, Texas. I would like to know when and where Martin and his wife and Tom and his wife died and where they are buried or any other information I may be able to get.—L. E. Smith, 305 East 5th Street, Austin, Texas 78701

James Pinkney Evans

I would like to hear from anyone who has any information on my grandfather, James Pinkney Evans who died shortly

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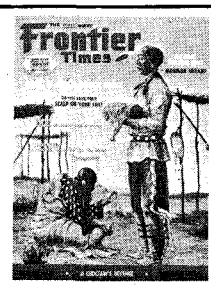

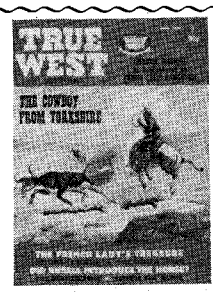

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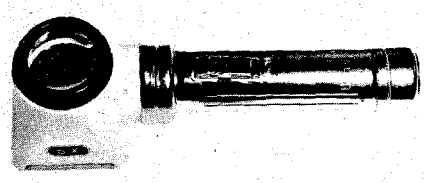

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before the birth of my father, Bobbie E. Evans in 1889 in Hamilton County, Texas, or his family. One story says that my grandfather was from central Tennessee and another that he was from England. One says that he died from a fever and another that he was shot. My grandmother remarried soon after and for some reason she did not want my father to know about his father's people and refused to talk about them.

My grandmother's maiden name was Sarah Jane Greene. Her father was a thirty-two degree Master Mason and she was said to be a direct descendant of an American Revolutionary War officer. Her mother's maiden name was Amanda Doty. My grandmother and her family migrated from Arkansas to Texas when my grandmother was a small child, I think. My grandmother had dark hair and brown eyes and my father had sandy hair and pale blue eyes. It is considered that at least two of my grandparents must have been nearsighted as nearsightedness is a hereditary disorder. My grandfather was said to have been a school teacher as well as a rancher.—F. Evans, Box 195, Slidell, Louisiana 70458

Myrtle Dudley

I would appreciate very much if anyone could help me locate my sister Myrtle Dudley. At the time I last saw her in Pasadena, California in 1932 she was employed as a domestic by a family living on Mountain Street. I have since made many trips to California and Arizona. All the people I talked to said she just left without saying where she was going. We were small when both of us were placed in an orphanage. I went on my own when I was fourteen in 1919 and when I was seventeen I entered the army where I stayed most of the time until 1944. I was mustered out totally disabled. Since that time my health has been failing steadily and now I must spend most of my time in a veteran's hospital. I would be very grateful if I could at least hear from her and then, God willing, I might even get to see her again.—John D. Dudley, 700 9th Avenue South, Clinton, Iowa 52732

Geneva Marie Haller

I am trying to locate my sister, Geneva Marie Haller, whom I haven't seen for forty-nine years. In 1919 when my father left Texas to live in Seattle, Washington he took my brother Louis Haller and my sister Geneva with him. I haven't seen her since. My father returned to Texas and passed away in 1935. Geneva left home and married Ervin Worsham who sheared sheep in the country around San Francisco, California. Later they separated and in 1950 he passed away. My sister had blue eyes and brown hair (may be grey or dyed now) and was five feet tall and weighed about 115 or 120 pounds. She is like her father, who was short and heavy when older and he had blue eyes and brown hair. Father's name was August Ben Haller. I do not know if my sister remarried or if so to whom. My sister was born here in San Antonio, Texas on November 15, 1909. I have some pictures but she was just a child when they were taken and people can change a lot in that many years. Perhaps a reader might know her and where she is living.—Mrs. Ella Smith, 221 Lotus, San Antonio, Texas 78210

The French Lady's Treasure

(Continued from page 11)

"Nope," I says.

"Can't you take me down to Astoria in the skiff? I could get a boat there."

"Could," says I, "but couldn't take the trunk. And you wouldn't get very far without the trunk."

"I wouldn't get very far anyway," she says. "Let's go back to camp." So I paddled her back the mile or so we'd come in the skiff.

Turned out there was a couple of police officers there at the house with Mr. Kempton. Turned out that Miller had blackmailed them that time he visited and knowed all about what happened at St. Paul. Second time they wouldn't pay him any money, so he took his story to the police.

Mr. Kempton had been a whoremaster in St. Paul, and Denny Kempton had been a mistress of ceremonies, as it were, in one of Kempton's establishments. (That was the source of money, evidently, that he received every month from St. Paul.) One of the girls where Mrs. Kempton hung out had a real or imagined grievance against Kempton and went after him with a knife. So he killed her.

Mrs. Kempton was the only witness, and he had married her to keep her from testifying. That was why, in part, she was running away—that and the scandal. As it turned out, it was her testimony and his scar from the knife wound that saved his neck—got him an outright acquittal when the trial finally come up.

All this took some time, and meanwhile I had long ago left the Kempton place and was working on the river. Kempton sold out both his camps and his forest privileges, partly to pay expenses of the trial. After it was all over, he come back to Oregon with Mrs. Kempton.

Whether it was the trial or all the whiskey he drunk or some disease, I don't know. He come back to Oregon, bought a hundred and sixty acres of land right along a gully, bought hisself five donkey engines, and built a twelve-foot drain down the middle of the canyon. Next he cleared both slopes of the canyon of all brush and timber, and set to leveling off that land, moving the dirt from the sides of the canyon onto the twelve-foot drain at the bottom. Anybody ask him what he was doing, said he was building a hog ranch. Before he ever finished that crazy job, he went completely crazy and died violent.

I'm not right sure what happened to Mrs. Kempton. Heard in a roundabout sort of way that she moved to another town, changed her name the easy way by marrying again, and had a flock of kids. That would be nice if it happened that way, because I ever once in a while think about that lady, and it's always with a little bit of a lump in my throat.

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WESTERN BOOK ROUNDUP

By The Old Bookaroos

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We do not handle the books reviewed below. If interested in purchasing, please check your local bookstore, or address your order to the individual publisher in care of this office and we will be glad to forward.

GREAT WESTERN GHOSTS

The wide-open spaces, lofty mountains, and howling winds of the West were effective in the development of countless Indian legends and the ghost stories which have become a part of Western Americana. The Western Writers of America have tracked down and recorded the stories of some of the area's most famous ghosts. *Great Ghost Stories of the Old West* (Four Winds Press, $3.50) edited by Betty Baker and illustrated by Mel Fowler, is a collection of seven top ghost tales. S. Omar Barker, Will Henry, Clay Fisher, Thomas Thompson, Phoebe and Todhunter Ballard, T. U. Olsen, and Glenn R. Vernam are the authors. Cowboys, outlaws, Indians, railroaders, miners, and settlers all knew of "ghosts," and told their versions with feeling and convictions. Highly entertaining.

A SPECTACULAR!

Public interest is readily directed toward disasters that threaten human life, and train wrecks have always demanded plenty of attention. Over fifty years ago, a train wreck became the theme of a popular folk song when the hero, Casey Jones, gunned the throttle on old 99 and didn't make a curve. The planned head-on collision of two old locomotives was a sure crowd-getter at country fairs and other celebrations. A new book called *Train Wrecks* (Superior, $12.50) by Robert C. Reed presents a pictorial history of spectacular train accidents in the United States. The author adds to our enlightenment by classifying train wrecks in the following categories: derailments, head-on collisions, rear-end collisions, bridge disasters, telescopes, fires, running gear failures, hotboxes and broken parts, run-aways, crossing accidents and boiler explosions. Included is a selected bibliography of value to railway buffs.

CHEROKEE LORE

Students of Indian Americana should find an item of interest in *New Echota Letters* (Southern Methodist University Press, $5.00) edited by Jack Frederick Kilpatrick and Anna Gritts Kilpatrick. The book is composed of selected articles written by Samuel Austin Worcester for *The Cherokee Phoenix* at New Echota, Oklahoma Territory. It first was published seven years after the great Cherokee leader, Sequoyah, had invented the Cherokee alphabet. A missionary, Samuel Worcester, wrote articles for *The Cherokee Phoenix* in both English and Cherokee. Some of his articles in English, which appeared in the newspaper, make up the text of this book. The writings deal with Cherokee life, linguistics, mythology, social history, and politics. There is a good bibliography, but no index.

LOOKING FOR LOOT?

Treasure hunting has been a perennially popular subject for readers and searchers since the first pirate supposedly buried his loot and constructed a rude map by which to find it again. *Treasure: How and Where to Find It* (Arco Publishing Co., $4.95) by Robert I. Nesmith and John S. Potter, Jr. is a handbook of information for the treasure seeker. Included are details about how two million dollars worth of Spanish loot was recovered off the Florida coast, the forty-four men who lost their lives seeking the Lost Dutchman Mine, and the West Indian town of Port Royal which sank into the sea and was found three centuries later together with rich pirate treasure. The book is wide in scope, covering treasure lost under water and on land, mines, robbers' and pirates' loot, gold panning and placer mining. Locations are listed coast to coast and equipment and techniques are described. Nesmith is a world famous consultant to treasure seekers and Potter is author of *The Treasure Diver's Guide*. Maps, profuse illustrations, exploration of treasure terms and equipment, and rules of ownership will make this book useful to the student and seekers of treasure.

FOR ALL AGES!

Young People's Arizona (The Naylor Co., $3.95) by Oren Arnold is an illustrated reader for young people of all ages. Arnold, author of dozens of books, has received recognition and awards for his service to Arizona. His recent *Arizona Under the Sun* is a book about the sunshine state for adults. *Young People's Arizona* presents the state as being full of young people as contrasted to a common picture of a home for the retired or incapacitated. Arnold tells of these young people and the things about Arizona which attract them—Arizona's heritage, how people make a living, fun in the sun, Indians, and natural history. The book end maps of the state, drawings and a photo section, a selected bibliography on Arizona, and an index.

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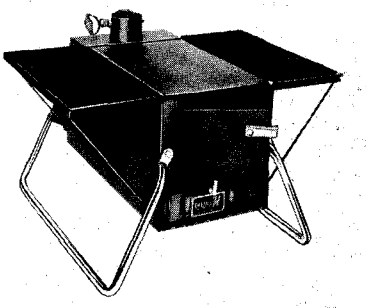

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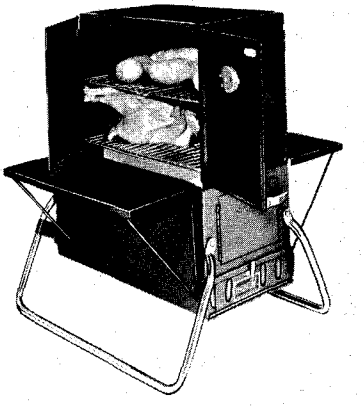

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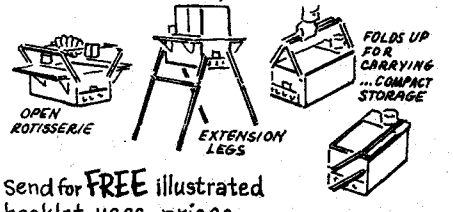

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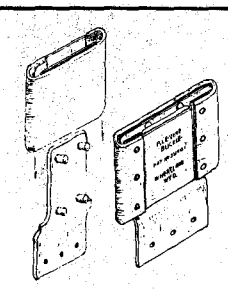

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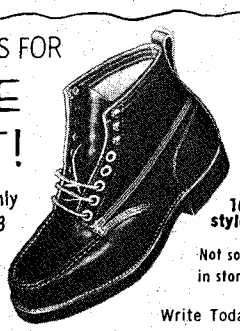

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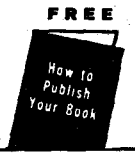

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Charlie Siringo

(Continued from page 37)

" 'Come here, Zubie,' he called. 'I want you to meet Charlie Siringo, the great cowboy detective.'

" 'I met him on the mesa as I rode off,' I replied. And Mr. Siringo added that I had been kind enough to direct him to the ranch.

"Dad looked at Old Slim and said, 'Kinda went in a hurry, didn't you?'

" 'Yeah,' I answered. All the time I kept an eye on Mr. Siringo for I thought he might tell Dad how fast I'd left him on the mesa. But he never batted an eye and neither did I. I knew he would 'do to take along,' as Dad would have expressed it.

"Pointing to the wolfhound stretched out by Siringo, Dad said, 'And this is Eat 'em up Jake.' The dog looked at me and blinked as though to acknowledge the introduction. I was tongue-tied. Imagine that beautiful, aristocratic creature's having such a name!

"DURING the entire afternoon Dad and Siringo talked of places and events, and I was consumed with interest. Their conversation gradually got around to the Lincoln County War and Billy the Kid. When they hit that topic I listened intently. So did Eat 'em up Jake.

"Whenever Dad referred to the 'war' we knew he referred to the trouble in Lincoln County. We knew, too, that Mother momentarily was not within hearing, for she would not permit him to talk of those troublesome years. Sometimes a stranger would ask, 'What war?' But to folks in old Lincoln County there was just one war. And my Dad had played his part in it.

"When the cook went into the kitchen with an armful of wood, Dad aroused long enough to tell me to show Mr. Siringo where to put his horse. He said emphatically that no bedroll would be needed for we had plenty of places for Siringo to sleep.

"I helped him take care of his horses. After they were well curried, brushed, watered, and fed we went to the house for supper.

"Never in my life had Dad permitted a dog to enter the house and I held my breath when Eat 'em up Jake haughtily stalked in before his master. Siringo seated himself before the fireplace and Jake curled up beside him. To my astonishment Dad ignored both me and the dog. But he changed the subject that had so absorbed both men during the afternoon. That was because Mother had come in and Mr. Siringo had been introduced to her.

"During the evening meal and afterwards Dad skillfully headed off Siringo when he showed indications of interest in the Lincoln County War. Mother, too, was adept at that little convention, and it was seldom that a stranger made the mistake of mentioning it.

"After we had finished the meal Siringo collected the bones and scraps of meat from the plates for Jake. Greatly to my relief he took them to the back porch before giving them to the dog. Our own dogs, accustomed to getting the table scraps, gathered about the wolfhound but not one of them offered to challenge the stranger's supper.

"Again the conversation was centered about stories of the past, but they dealt with far-away places and subjects. I was thoroughly enjoying hear Siringo tell of his travels and exciting experiences when I noticed the lights of an approaching car. Then the Bonnells, my sister Sydney and her husband Bert, arrived. They had come down for some orchestra practice and soon we were seated in the seldom-used parlor with Sydney at the organ.

"Siringo sat near her with Jake at his feet. Dad got his fiddle, Wilbur the guitar, and my sister Anne, her mandolin. Dad loved acting as director. And woe be to the unfortunate who hit the wrong key or struck the wrong beat! The erring musician was apt to get a sharp rap on the head with the tip of Dad's bow. It was very gratifying to me to have Sydney present for if she were not there either Edith or I was pressed into service at the organ.

"When Dad had put them through their paces with the old tunes he loved, he handed his violin over to my only brother Wilbur, and said, 'Now, some Mexican music.' Annie took the guitar to accompany Wilbur. I still think he could produce the sweetest music I ever heard.

"When my brother finished, Dad turned to me and—as I had feared he might—said, 'Now Zubie, it's your turn. Sing!' And when Dad gave an order it made no difference whether one could sing or not—he did. My father had been paying all winter for music lessons for me, both for voice and piano, and I knew I had to justify that expense. So I started his favorite, 'Annie Laurie.'

"NOT UNTIL morning did I have an opportunity to talk with my father. Then as I helped with the horses I asked why Mr. Siringo had come and what he wanted. This idea of our having a detective around—it just wasn't normal.

" 'He says he is gathering information for a book about Billy the Kid,' Dad told me. Then he added as though talking to himself, 'And looking for outlaws.'

"Outlaws! There weren't any outlaws on the Ruidoso. Long ago before I was born, before Dad was married, yes; but no more. From that time on I kept a wary eye on Mr. Siringo. And I was rather glad that he stayed only a few days before moving up to Bert Bonnell's for the summer. The entire summer. And he paid nothing. If his presence disturbed Sydney she never let anyone know it. She was equal to anything and anybody who came along. Sydney accepted him as though he had been a member of the family. He almost was—he helped with the roundup and the branding and he helped efficiently. He did anything in the way of chores that became necessary during the week. On Sundays he sat on top of the rail of the round picket corral with other spectators to watch the boys ride the broncs.

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"And when they couldn't ride, Annie and Edith did! Cowboys came for miles around to show off their skill in the saddle. Being thrown occasionally was no reflection on them, for Dad never had a gentle horse on the place. When anyone mounted one of our horses he'd better be able to ride for that was what he was going to have to do."

Helena Coe saw Charlie Siringo and Eat 'em up Jake for the last time the evening before her mother and she returned to Roswell for her to enter school. Though his master had arrived at easy familiarity with the Coes, Jake maintained his reticence. Nobody got on friendly terms with that aristocrat. Just why he should be so attached to a man so exactly his opposite remained a mystery to the family.

It was several years before Charlie Siringo came again to the canyon of the Ruidoso. This time it was obvious that he either had suffered financial reverses or had some reason for affecting poverty. The Coes suspected the former.

He was very poorly dressed, and afoot. In cow country being afoot is almost the equivalent of being a sheepherder. Siringo carried a bedroll and camp equipment on a burro. No longer was he accompanied by his magnificent dog. He was followed by a pack of nondescript hounds, anything but aristocratic in appearance or manner.

Again he had come for a protracted stay at the Bonnell ranch; and nobody was ever turned from that hospitable home. And again nobody knew the purpose of his visit, nor his destination when he decided to end it.

To My Tormentors, I Bequeath

(Continued from page 35)

young man between the age of 21 and 23 years, a member of a highly respected, Christian family. However, he was a victim of circumstance, having fallen in with bad company."

Unlike Singleton's character evaluation, there is no discrepancy in the tragic still-life painted by the cold facts found in Bee County files. The court records do not mirror the intricate workings of Singleton's mind during this period, but they do reflect the on-surface frustration of a man fighting for his life through almost two years of court action and confinement.

What turn of events had caused the young Texan to stand sweating on the scaffold in Beeville? Dwyer and Singleton had been friends. What had happened that breezy July day in 1875 when Dwyer was killed?

Deputy Young recalls that day and the long months which followed: "One afternoon after they had spent a full morning in drinking they set out from Beeville in a buggy with the expressed purpose of going to Rockport to purchase whiskey for setting up a saloon in Dog Town, McMullen County. Before they left, Dwyer had displayed a large amount of money that he was carrying on his person. About sundown somebody came in from

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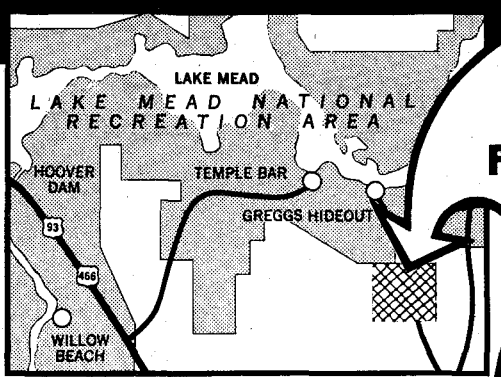

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the direction of Rockport with the word that Dwyer's dead body was lying beside the road a few miles away. The body had been rifled. We caught Singleton in Indianola, where he was about to go aboard a ship, Dwyer's money in his possession.

"Singleton had no defense. Court met shortly after his capture, and he was sentenced to be hanged. He appealed his case, and while decision of the higher court was pending I had charge of the jail in which he was lodged. It was just a lumber shack and had to be guarded day and night, for Singleton, like nearly all other outlaws of the time, had friends —and desperate friends at that who would not mind risking their lives to liberate him. The district judge advised Sheriff Walton to take the prisoner to Galveston for safe-keeping.

"The best route to Galveston at that time was by stage for something over a hundred miles to Flatonia, the terminus of the G. H. and S. A. Railroad, and thence by rail. If we set out openly for Flatonia we felt sure that Singleton's friends would attempt a rescue. So one night another deputy sheriff and I put Singleton on a horse and rode with him into a thicket on the Aransas Creek, where we chained him to a tree. The next day Captain Walton reported that we had gone to Galveston, and he had plenty of fun watching the antics of Singleton's friends when they failed to pick up our trail. For sixteen days our meals were brought to us there in the brush."

Mrs. Walton prepared and carried the meals to Singleton and his guards during the time he was kept in the barn, being aided by Ella and Nannie, two of her little daughters.

THE GUARDS, Young and Frank Boggus, and the prisoner became fast friends and to pass the time practiced target shooting, the gun being in the hands of the prisoner as often as it was in the hands of the guards.

Young continues: "Then I rode into Beeville and answered questions about the trip to Galveston. That night Captain Walton and I left for Flatonia with Singleton. Until we reached the railroad he was in joyous spirits; he was really expecting to be rescued at any moment, but when we got on the train and snapped a handcuff on his right hand with the other end on my left hand, he wilted.

"After considerable delay the case was affirmed and Singleton was brought back to Beeville to hang. He remained hard, cool, and hopeful to the end, for his was to be the first legal hanging of a white man in the country for a long time and he could not believe that his followers would allow any such procedure. Meantime I had resigned as deputy sheriff and Sheriff Walton was so expectant of a jail delivery that he got a half dozen Rangers to guard the prisoner. While they guarded, Singleton wrote a letter to his mother saying that he would never be hanged in public 'before a gaping multitude of fools, especially Bee County fools'."

Singleton wrote another letter to his widowed mother, this one only two days before his execution. The letter indicated a change of heart from the letter mentioned by Young. In the second note he offered comforting words to his mother, telling her that he did not commit the crime with malice or aforethought. He explained that it was "caused from a quarrel over a trifle." Singleton tenderly assured her also that his being under sentence of death was not the consequence of his home training, for she had taught him the right way to live, but he had been weak and sinful and did not heed her teaching.

One of the stories told concerning the "trifle" says that it was an article belonging to Singleton's mother which was broken when Dwyer, in a drunken stupor, tossed Singleton's suitcase from the wagon. The tale adds that Singleton's open disheveled suitcase was found near Dwyer's body.

In closing the letter, Singleton asked God in "His infinite mercy to bless, comfort and console my dear mother, and may we meet in a better world beyond the grave."

Young notes that "On the eve of his hanging, he played seven-up the night through with the Rangers."

After the hanging, relatives of Singleton asked that the scaffold be removed from the courthouse yard, but it seemed that no one had the authority to do so. A couple of days later, a storm hit the Beeville area and demolished only the gallows. This brought about the contentions that probably "the law" had hanged the wrong man, a feeling shared by many of the local citizens for a score of years.

IF SINGLETON could have seen what "good" his act of murder, and consequently his hanging, brought to Bee County, he probably would have turned over in his grave. The sentiment of the people became strongly in favor of prohibition. Liquor was credited with being the cause of the crime and on January 20, 1877, an election was held to prohibit the sale of intoxicants and medicated bitters in the county. The election carried by a vote of 113 to 76. Although two attempts were made in the next two years to vote liquor back, prohibition remained in force for some time. This pious attitude was somewhat offset, however, by a document filed with other county records.

"On the matter of the petition of A. A. Scott and other citizens of Bee County, representing that the body of one J. E. Singleton, who had been executed for murder, had been buried in the most selected and numerously occupied part of the cemetery in violation of all custom and decency, and to the great discredit and disgust of the people of Bee County, and asking that the body be removed from its present locality, to some more fit and becoming spot—it was considered by the Court that inasmuch as the body of J. E. Singleton, an executed felon, was buried by the county authorities, and not by his friends, it should have been buried in what is termed the Potter's Field portion of the cemetery—that the custom of past and present ages, with respect to the burial of executed felons,

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has been and is now to exclude them from consecrated ground and may be considered as law in this instance—and it approving to the satisfaction of the Court, that the portion of the cemetery wherein the body of said Singleton is interred is under the special control of this Court, as trustees for the people of Bee County, as is of record in the clerk's office by deed of conveyance—and it also approving to the Court, that the prayer of said petitioner is fair, just and with reason it is therefore considered by the Court that the body of J. E. Singleton should be removed.—It is therefore ordered by the Court, that the body of J. E. Singleton, who was executed for murder in Bee County, be disinterred, removed from its present locality and buried in the Potter's Field portion of the grave-yard on or before the 1st day of August 1877.

"And furthermore it being made known to the Court, that the body of said Singleton was buried in its locality by request of W. M. Jones of Bee County—it is further ordered by the Court that the Sheriff D. A. T. Walton confer with said W. M. Jones, and give him the option of having it removed prior to said 1st day of August 1877, and in case said Jones declines to do so then the said D. A. T. Walton, sheriff of Bee County, is ordered to have said body removed in accordance with the foregoing order."

So the good people of Bee County moved the murderer's body from the respectable portion of the cemetery to the Potter's Field section, making it clear once and for all that death alone does not cleanse a man of his sin!

Leadville's Ice Palace

(Continued from page 33)

exhibit of home grown vegetables, grain and fruit to prove to visitors that the climate wasn't always as arctic at it appeared to be.

In the center of Leadville's palace was the ice skating rink, 190 x 80 feet. Careful planning had resulted in the huge room's appearing to be a cave of ice. The roof, supported by eight cantilever trusses, was studded with myriads of ice stalactites. It sparkled like a gigantic coverlet of diamonds, for the entire surface was covered with an ice frosting.

The rink was enclosed on the sides by an arcaded wall of ice blocks and the glass walls of the restaurant and ballroom. There was a promenade at each end. Octagonal pillars were built 15 feet apart and were five feet in diameter. Incandescent lamps were placed in the center of the pillars and light radiated from them in all directions. The frozen walls glowed from embedded bulbs and lights hung from the trusses. An electric searchlight was placed in each corner of the room, and the multi-colored rays met in the center, or could be aimed at any part of the rink. Over a brick base, the ice was eight inches thick, and the supervisor, Monty Fitzgerald, saw to it that the surface was kept at its best. The skating master of the rink, which was open daily and at night, was Otis Richmond.

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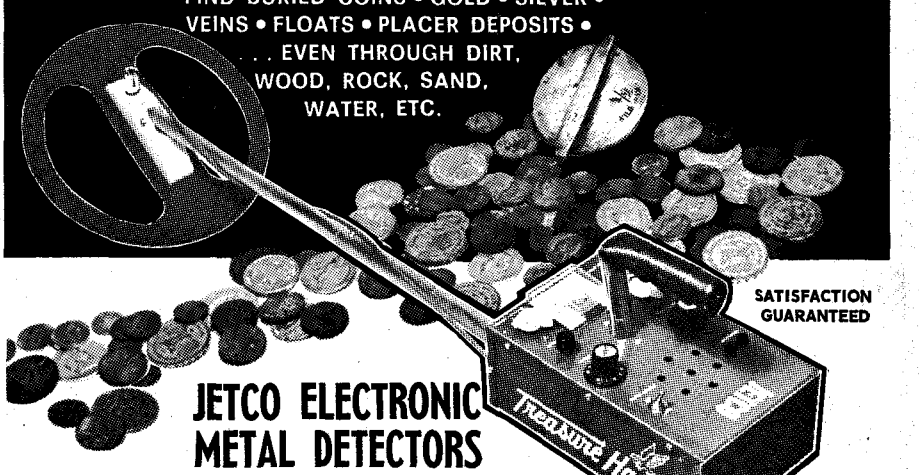

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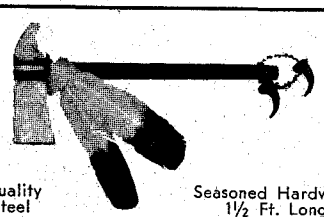

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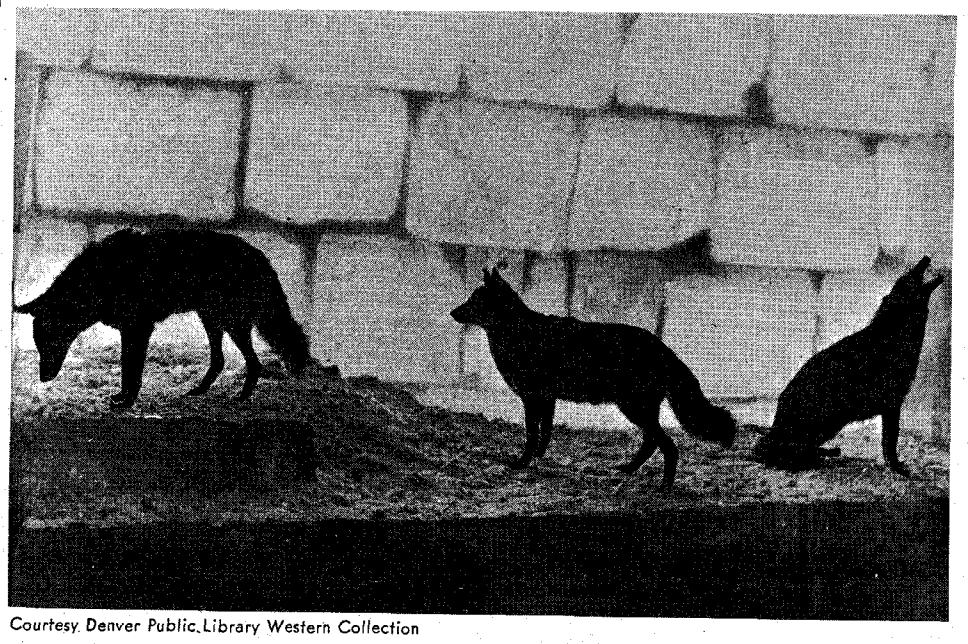

Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection

Stuffed wolves and other animals were displayed in the palace. The photo provides a closer look at some of the more than 5,000 tons of ice blocks used in the construction.

A grand ballroom, 80 x 50 feet, was located on one side of the rink. A restaurant, of the same dimension, was on the other side; it was used also as an auxiliary ballroom. These rooms were portions of two houses constructed within the palace with permanency in mind. The structures were heated with large base-burner stoves.

Connected with the ballroom were dressing rooms, with maids for the ladies. There were furnished parlors, whose glass walls facing the rink enabled spectators to watch the skaters in comfort. The floors of the ballroom and restaurant were made from Texas pine. The ballroom was finished in blue and terra cotta, and the walls of the restaurant were decorated in orange and blue. Arranged along the south, north and west walls of the restaurant were carnival-type concessions and booths offering souvenirs and other items. Cuts of meat, fruits, pickles and other food had been frozen into the icy walls of the promenade to lure hungry customers into the restaurant.

THERE WAS DANCING each night to the music of the famous Fort Dodge Cowboy Band, who could play anything from a polka to a waltz. Under the direction of Jack St. Clair, the band played on the balcony between the grand ballroom and the rink to furnish music for both skaters and dancers. The twenty-piece group was hired to play only during the month of January, after which it was hoped that local musicians could be engaged. Curling alleys and a gambling room were among the other amusements offered.

A large area of the interior was taken up with exhibits furnished by artists, hotels, railroads, merchants and manufacturers. Twenty thousand square feet of canvas had been utilized on which to paint the Midway Plaisance. Merchandise offered at local stores and products manufactured in the state and by nationally known companies had been frozen in ice blocks for display in the walls of the gallery. These items included vests and pants, rare flowers, cigars, overalls, mattresses, tents, silver and gold spoons, oysters, assayer crucibles, jewels and many other products.

Taxidermists' techniques were advertised by freezing in the blocks such wildlife as fish, a fox, a bear and her cubs, a mountain lion and a rabbit. "Living pictures" were among General Electric's presentation of many of Edison's inventions, and breweries and distilleries featured stacks of beer and whiskey. The Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad's display was a working model of a locomotive. H. B. Hardt, manager of exhibits around the world, had been engaged to arrange the displays.

Ice sculpture illustrating the life of Leadville's people was one of the main attractions. Figures were moulded from snow, then covered with water and frozen. Among the bigger-than-life-size snow statues were men engaged in various phases of mining operations, and a prospector and his burro loaded with equipment. Sculpture illustrating other facets of Leadville's economy were on display throughout the castle.

An afternoon parade officially opened the Carnival on January 15. Leadville's streets were crowded, many of the people wearing masks and carrying musical instruments. Schools were closed so that students could participate in the festivities. Winter sports clubs representing hockey, sleighing, coasting, tobogganing and curling were featured in the parade, and a number of bands played for the marchers who included local dignitaries and various organizations such as the police and fire departments. Four burros carried a bass drum, a gift to Leadville from the citizens of Pueblo, Colorado. "We Helped Build the Ice Palace" proclaimed a banner carried by members of the Miner's Union, while other workmen pulled blocks of ice on boards or carried tools used to build the palace. Five-year-old Hazel Marchin rode a sled pulled by two pug dogs.

Leadville's business houses were decorated during the carnival. Fifteen thousand dollars in gold bricks from the

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Little Jonny Mine were displayed in the Carbonate National Bank. Each weighed from fifty to sixty pounds, and was worth from six to eight thousand dollars.

Independent of the palace, but supported by the Crystal Carnival Association, were two toboggan slides which had been built as part of the carnival. For 1,200 feet a slide ran down the right side of Seventh Street; the slide from the ice palace down the other side of the street was 900 feet long. Facilities of each included a comfortable waiting room and lunch counter.

VISITORS CAME from many places, but particularly from Denver. A special rate of $5 round-trip from there to Leadville was featured by the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad. Included were two admissions to the palace. The rail line also advertised a special round-trip fare of $12 to Leadville from anywhere in Utah. Extra passenger cars had to be added to regularly scheduled trains by all railroads serving the area. Trains were met at the station by members of the Snowshoe Club, and visitors were then escorted downtown or to the ice palace.

Leadville was lit up as it never had been before. From the brilliantly-lighted palace along the toboggan courses to the Vendome Hotel, Wood had constructed 2,000-candle-power arc lights at 100-foot intervals. In addition, three pyrotechnic displays, the likes of which the West had never seen, were fired at the ice palace.

During the carnival, special days were designated such as Press Day, the official opening day of the palace, when newspapermen from across the country were present. Teachers brought their students on School Day, and the Colorado State Militia visited on Army Day. Mining Exchange Day was one of the biggest events of all, when delegations of the Colorado Mining Brokers from Cripple Creek, Denver, Colorado Springs and Victor converged on the Cloud City. The horse show, held the latter part of January in the riding gallery, was a highlight of the carnival.

A number of contests for large purses were held inside the huge structure. These included competition between teams from mining camps in double hand and hard-rock drilling. Prizes were given for the deepest hole drilled in fifteen minutes.

Even during the usually frigid months of January and February, Wood waged a constant battle to save the Leadville Ice Palace. Then an early thaw and the warm rays of the spring sun threatened the building from without; attacking it from within were the heated rooms. He hung out the muslin again, and ordered the north side of the building abandoned for safety reasons.

Wood was honored at a banquet on March 10, 1896, after many activities in the castle had been cancelled due to the melting ice. The question of whether or not there'd be another ice palace in 1897 came up, and the next day the editor of the *Chronicle* admitted: "If Director General Wood had his way about it, he would blow the Ice Palace off the face of Capitol Hill, leveling the magnificent struc-

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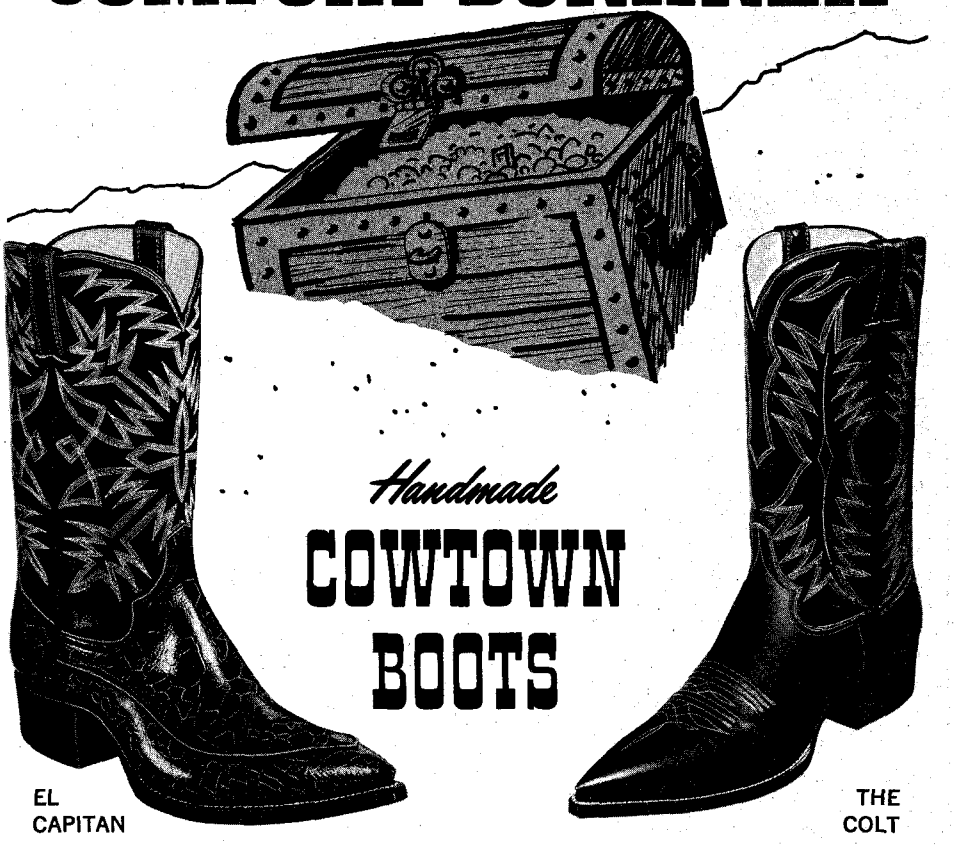

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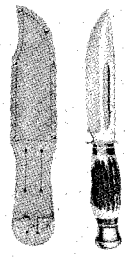

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ture to the ground into a heap of ruins by one bombardment with a cannon and sky-piercing pyrotechnics. This he thinks would be the proper ending for the most gorgeous and beautiful building ever erected in any age, of any material, by any people."

Wood was also approached with the idea of erecting (at nominal expense) an ice palace with nearly all-wood frame, designed like a fort, and he declared such a project would never be undertaken, "Not if I have anything to do with it!"

When the harassed director general finally admitted defeat, he announced that the few remaining activities scheduled would be held in the palace on March 28, after which condemnation notices would be posted over the entrances and on the exterior walls. (If you were a boy in the spring of '96 you were "chicken" if you didn't take a run or two through the condemned walls of the Leadville Ice Palace. As a desperate safety measure, Wood finally had a wire fence constructed around the palace.)

The sale of stock and receipts from admissions to the palace came to about $100,000. Wood had donated a total of $22,000 of his own money, and many other prominent mining men had contributed to keep the palace open. However, the expense of maintaining it and the large contest prizes awarded during the carnival helped to make the Leadville Ice Palace a financial failure.

The most elegant structure of its type ever built lasted only a few more weeks. Residents strolling along the wire fence in the increasingly warm sunshine of April and May, sometimes would pause to watch the Leadville Ice Palace slowly, slowly seep into the soil of Capitol Hill.

Scouting the Utes

(Continued from page 17)

took me to the roof of his house to point out the Sierra Blanca and instructed me to leave the mountains on the right and follow up the Saint Louis Valley [San Luis], where I would undoubtedly find them.

"WE PROVIDED ourselves with ten days rations, blankets and a little corn for our horses to start on our expedition. The snow was knee deep and all we could do the first day was to reach El Cervo de los Utahs about fifteen miles from Red River. Here we found on the south side some bare ground with fine grass, dug a hole, heated rocks and made snow water for our horses and passed the night without a fire in accordance with the advice given us by Laforet. No doubt the advice was good, as from that elevated point the fire would have been seen in the night twenty or more miles. The consequence to us was a most miserable cold night with hardly any sleep.

"Next day brought us to the Culetva [Rio Culebra], a small river with ice so thick we could not get through it and had to repeat making snow water for our horses. The third day, about noon, we sighted miles away about twenty horsemen coming towards us on the gallop. We made for an abandoned sheep corral where we dismounted, tied our horses, examined our arms and prepared ourselves for an attack. Nearer and nearer came our supposed foes and I must admit that we felt badly scared. But knowing that running would be sure death we fortified ourselves as well as we could with the poor material on hand. The horses, now within a mile, stopped suddenly and took another course to our great relief and then we saw what our snow blind eyes could not distinguish before. They were wild horses.

"That night we made our camp near the present Fort Garland. Next day [we camped] where the Mosio [Mosca] pass crossed the mountains. After a dreary march of seven days more, at two o'clock we struck a trail, the first since we left Rio Colorado and after following it for half an hour we saw the village of the Utes in a bottom on a small stream. The Indians saw us and ran for their horses which were grazing among the willows up and down the creek but a good mile from the village.

"Laforet had told us that we would be safe in their village and, acting on his advice, we whipped and spurred our jaded animals to get to the village before the Indians could surround us. It was nip and tuck but we made it.

"WE DISMOUNTED at once and with arms and lariat in hand entered the first lodge we came to. The reception, however, was far from being a friendly one. Not even a gift of tobacco was accepted. I left my companion in the lodge and went in search of Chico Belasquez [Velasquez], the main chief, who when a boy had been a shepherd and spoke good Spanish. He probably had been a captive among the Mexicans. The Indian I asked would not give me any information as to the whereabouts of their chief but I did succeed in finding him at last. I gave him my message but did not get an answer. I noticed, however, that by his order twenty or thirty young men started out in all directions. About nine o'clock at night the last of the young men returned. The chief told me that he had taken us for spies who had lost their way but, since only the two tracks of our horses could be found, he believed that we were what we claimed to be.

"He then ordered his wives to give me something to eat. Boiled dried buffalo meat with plenty of buffalo hairs sticking to it but the cravings of my stomach were such that I did not take the pains to separate the hairs from the meat.

"By the time I got through with my supper the lodge was filled with all the subchiefs and influential men who had squatted around a small fire in the center of the lodge. I was asked for some tobacco which was cut fine and mashed with the dried bark of the red willow but no pipe could be found, I having lost mine in company with my tobacco while running toward the village. Necessity is the mother of invention and this rule held good with my red brothers, who manufactured one out of an old tin cup

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and stuck it into a [piece] of cane. The pipe would go round with each Indian taking a few whiffs. I was invited to take a seat and on my refusal of smoking with them the chief told me that my intentions were not good. Seeing that my breach of edicate [etiquette] had offended him I took my seat among them and took my whiffs whenever my turn came. I had provided myself with a couple of plugs of tobacco and had not been particular in the choice of the weed as I intended to give it to the Indians. It turned out to be some of the very vilest stuff and my punishment in having to smoke it was a just one.

"The chief then asked me for my credentials which I offered in the shape of an order on the O. M. Dept. stating that I was to receive $5.00 a day while absent on my trip to the Utes. This order went from hand to hand and was closely examined by everyone and it satisfied them entirely.

"After a long parley with his brother chiefs, Velasquez told me that the child had died, also its colored nurse. [He told me] that they would go to Taos as soon as the grass would be strong enough to keep their horses in good condition and that no American or Mexican would be killed any more, which promise was faithfully kept."

CHIEF CHICO VELASQUEZ furnished Kroenig and his companion with provisions and an escort through the more dangerous portion of their trip back to Rio Colorado.

"Next day we arrived in Taos. Soon after I met Colonel Beall to whom I reported the result of the trip. After inviting me to a glass of wine, he said, 'Do you know that I have not had a single night's sound rest since you left. I have reproached myself over and over again to have sent you on such a dangerous errand and I thank God you are back.'

"When I claimed my pay he put me off from day to day and at last gave me a new order on the O. M. Dept. including three or four weeks loafing in Taos at the rate of $5.00 a day.

"He then engaged me as a second spy at $25.00 a month and rations to watch an Apache Indian who had married a Mexican woman and lived in Rio Colorado. This Indian was shot through the knee and of no use to his tribe as a fighter but very useful to them in giving information about our movements of troops.

"I kept my position for a month, sat up many a night in a little log cabin filled with straw and fronting the home of the Apache. I made a couple of night trips to Taos with such information as I could gather but seeing that the old fox was too sly for me and that I could be of no use to the Dept., I took my discharge.

"When I drew my month's pay in Taos I met Mr. Quinn who had the beef contract when I was a volunteer. I had avoided him, believing that my refusal to take a bribe had incensed him against me. He astonished me by asking me if I did not wish to start a store at Rio

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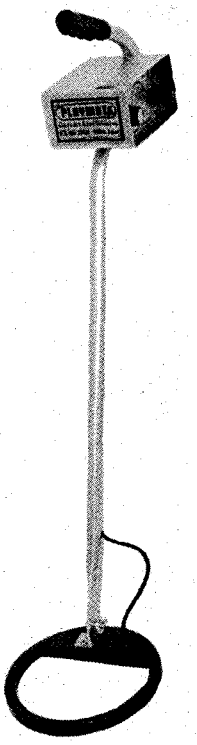

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Colorado and if so, that he would furnish me with a stock of goods by allowing him a certain percentage. I answered that he was the last man I expected a favor from after refusing the offered bribe. He said, 'That is the reason I want you. Go back to Rio Colorado, rent or buy a house, fix it up with shelves and counters and come for the goods as soon as possible.'

"I did as he wanted me to do and was soon installed as a store keeper with a limited but general stock of merchandise. I had competition but as I was satisfied with a fair profit I soon had most of the trade.

"The town was extremely quiet. No newspaper ever reached us as there was no mail route established to Taos, thirty miles distant, being the nearest point.

"The Apaches, owing to the great depth of snow, had not committed any depredations in our vicinity and had operated on the east side of the mountains, stealing and killing wherever they found an opportunity.

"The United States mail coach with several passengers, among them a Mr. Goldstein, was attacked at Wagon Mound, now on the line of the A. T. & S. F. (Railway) with a small town of the same name. Everyone was killed after a long running fight. The contents of the mail bags were scattered on the prairie. The letters and papers were afterwards gathered from a large extent of the country as the winds had blown them long distances. Among them was a letter for me from Germany. Although the envelope was torn the letters written by various members of my family reached me, all with the advancing season.

"The Indians returned. The little Mexican mills which with large hoppers filled were generally left alone during the night but cattle and horses were stolen."

KROENIG'S efforts to establish himself as a merchant continued and, of course, the big break would come later when he euchered the Indians out of gold coin as though each coin were worth a dollar apiece. This set him up financially.

"I was agreeably surprised to see my friend Viereck ride into town [Rio Colorado]. As his visit promised to be a long one, Viereck proposed to act as cook and I quit my boarding place to run bachelor's hall and things went on nicely for awhile but Viereck's restlessness could not reconcile itself for any length of time to the subordinate and inactive position he held."

As Kroenig's chronicle indicates, Viereck, an artist of sorts, was a dedicated con man and lived solely by his wits. Apparently things had gotten a little warm in Taos and he sought shelter in Rio Colorado with his old friend Kroenig.

He worked a scheme or two in Rio Colorado and then hurried back to Taos and his girl friend, refreshed with new ideas on how to work his way back into the hearts of the Taos citizens in his role as an artist.

"The wheat crop was harvested and my stock of goods very much reduced when one day at the dawn of day my neighbor, Charles Autober [Autobee], knocked at my door telling me to get up at once as a long string of mounted Apaches were coming into town. As we had had so many false alarms I did not pay any attention to him. But when a couple of Mexicans soon after said the same, I got up, took my gun and went out the back door where I found Autobee, Laforet and Beaubien already in position in an adobe hole. About eighty or ninety yards off a large number of Indians [came] riding in single file.

"I joined my friends at once and as Autobee had a reputation of being a good Indian fighter he was by mutual consent given command. Autobee pointed out to each of us his Indian when we noticed that each of the first ten horses carried two men. These proved to be Utahs who were then at peace and who had each picked a wood chopper and mounted him in front of him in case of need, as a shield.

"The Utes, having noticed us, hollered not to shoot that they carried peace before them, calling attention to the Mexican wood choppers and that they came with the Apaches who were on their way to sign for peace.

"The Indians filed by not fifty feet of us and went directly to the house of the Alcade where we all went and I was appointed secretary. The Alcalde dictated.

"'TODAY, such and such Saints day, such a day of the week and such a day of the month and year of our Lord, came 120 Apaches in company of 10 Utes asking for peace'—and when I got that far an Apache pulled me by the coat and said [asked] in good Spanish, if I did not want to trade as they had plenty of money.

"I threw up my Secretary-ship and went with the Indians to my private room where he saw a sack with perhaps twenty pounds of wheat meal in it for which he offered me a dollar which I readily accepted. The Dollar he gave me was a gold piece and as he did not ask for any change I did not offer him any. Next article I sold him was some red calico which I had nailed on the wall. Then came a red woolen skirt I had on my saddle and bridle which I sold at $16.00.

"By this time a crowd of Apaches had come around but as they all carried bows and arrows in their hands I did not think it safe to open the store till I got a Mexican to issue the goods while I did the trading with gun in hand.

"I bought $700.00 in gold, mostly doubloons, two mules and a small mountain of buckskins and buffalo robes. The whole trade was made in such hurry that not more than one and a half hours elapsed from their first appearance till they were all gone.

"As soon as the Indians were plainly out of sight I mounted one of the mules I had bought that day, rode it bare back without a bridle and with gun on my shoulder to Arroyo Hondo where Mr. Quinn resided.

"I selected a small stock of goods,

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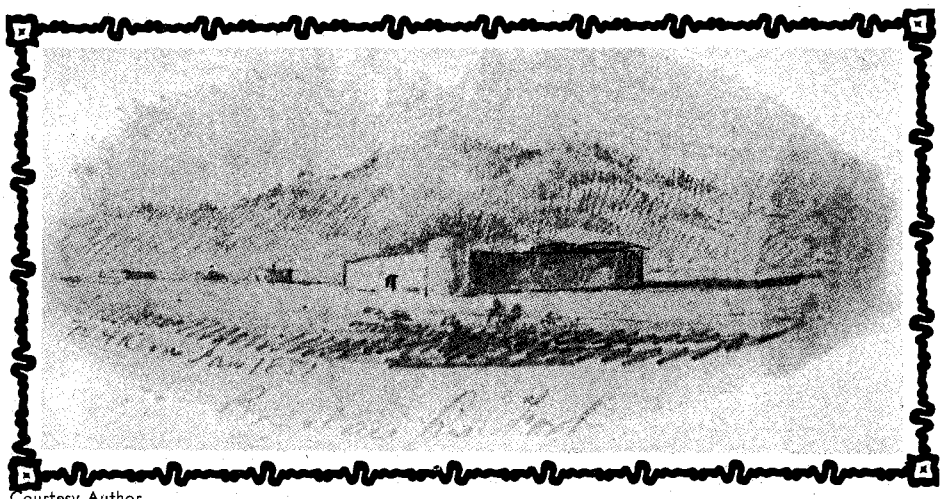

Courtesy Author

Barclay's Fort in an old sketch by Richard H. Kern, January 1851. The fort was built in the summer of 1849 by Alexander Barclay. Kroenig came into possession of it in 1856.

bought saddle and bridle and after having my packs [sent] on the way, mounted the mule which I had ridden bare back the day before as gentle as a donkey, but [this day] found too much for me.

"The Apaches, as I learned afterwards, had ridden the [mule], the day of their appearance in the settlement, all night and had by this forced march subdued its spirit. But after a good night's rest and plenty of corn, [it] had recovered from its fatigue and showed its natural viciousness. Mr. Quinn had a good bronco rider in his employ who after a half hour's ride turned the mule over to me perfectly subdued.

"The Indians had sold probably $1,200 of gold coin of which I gathered within a short time, $700.00. Three days after the Indians had given us this call, 500 to 600 volunteers and a company of Regulars came to Rio Colorado in search of the Apaches, overtook them, killed a squaw and took their camp with some stock. Among the spoils brought back I recognized many of the articles I had sold them.

"The company officer of the expedition reproached us for having traded with the Indians while at open war but what else could we do? The Mexicans were anxious to make peace and considered their Justice of the Peace as fully authorized to do so. For the four of us to have attacked them would have been the height of folly. After this, the Indians kept quiet for a number of days and as I had to go to Taos on some business I started on horseback and took the trail, although full of ambushes all the way to the nearest road. After crossing the river I had to climb a long and steep hill and after going a short distance I involuntarily stopped, feeling very much depressed without being able to account for it. I could not overcome this strange presentiment and after halting and starting three or four times I turned my horse around and took the wagon road, fully five or six miles farther removed from the mountains. I did not think of any danger at the time, believing that the Indians had gone down country to join the Mescalero Apaches, as such was the report. When I arrived at Taos a runner had brought in the news that two Mexicans had been killed by the Apaches the same morning on the trail."

KROENIG later became a progressive western farmer and he is credited with establishing the first flour mill in Colorado—present-day Garcia. He was also one of the first three farmers to manufacture Colorado-made cheese for the Denver market in 1860.

Kroenig had one hundred and sixty acres of land about eight miles up from the mouth of the Huerfano River and the products from this farm made agricultural news in the Denver papers in the early 1860s.

Baca and Kroenig's peons did most of the actual work on the Kroenig farm (at Greenhorn) while Kroenig freighted produce to Fort Larimer and other places. He was appointed administrator of the estate of Alexander Barclay, owner of Barclay's Fort at Watrous, New Mexico in 1856. He soon purchased this property and at once developed it into an outstanding farm with artificial lakes and an irrigation system.

In 1866, an Indian just happened to show William Kroenig and two of his friends a "pretty rock" and, upon questioning, revealed that it came from the top of Baldy on the Maxwell Land Grant. The ore was copper and Kroenig and some associates formed a company to mine copper. This incident led to the discovery of gold at Elizabethtown, New Mexico and the ultimate toppling of the Maxwell Empire.

Kroenig and Maxwell and others invested in the digging of a forty-mile ditch at the cost of $300,000. The failure of this project cost Kroenig much of his fortune which he later recouped in a mining venture in the Magdalena Mountains.

In 1864 Kroenig built a $40,000 mansion at Watrous. After his mining success at Magdalena he went into semi-retirement on his ranch and established one of the finest agricultural spreads in New Mexico. He sold his original home in 1885 and died near Watrous in December of 1900. His chronicle, written forty years after the events which he cited, is amazingly accurate, historically.

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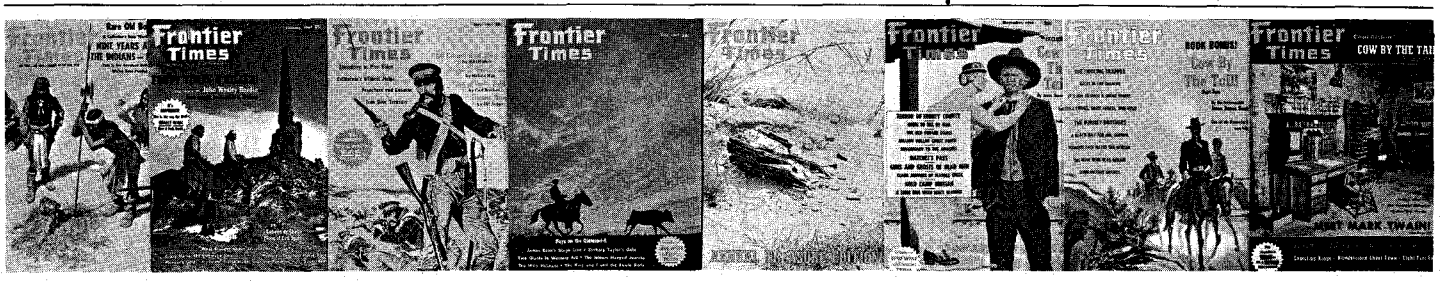

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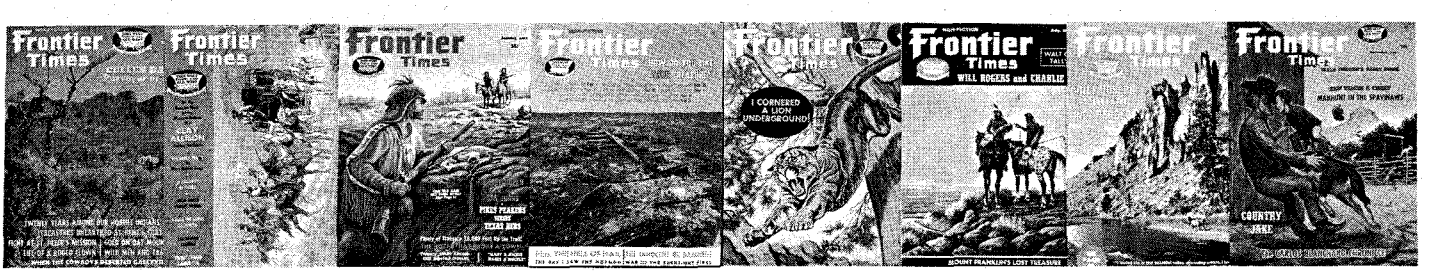

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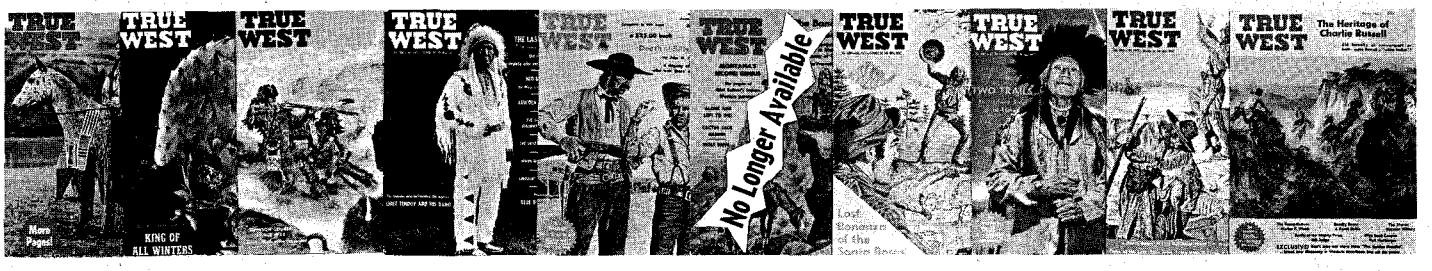

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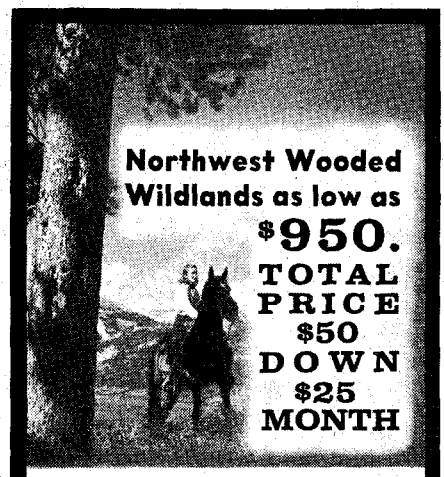

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How Green Is a Bullfrog?

(Continued from page 26)

Two men in their thirties from the West Coast bought the Hermitage Bar. (For obvious reasons I'll call them Smith and Brown.) During the winter, Smith fell hard for Mrs. Brown and the feeling was mutual. This was common camp gossip and known to all except, perhaps, poor old Brown. The desert held no attraction for Brown. He'd often said, "I'd hate to be buried in this God-forsaken country." That winter, he caught pneumonia and died. His wife had a nervous breakdown and left immediately for the coast without making any funeral arrangements. So Brown was buried in our desert cemetery.

The team pulling the transfer wagon which served as a hearse to haul the casket had always been the most docile and gentle horses imaginable. But this time they became almost unmanageable as soon as the cortege started. Snorting and trying to run away down the hill with the brake full on and a tight rein, it was difficult to slow them up enough so that the mourners walking behind could keep up with the wagon. After the graveside services were over and we all started back up the hill, the team again acted like two tired horses just plodding along.

Gamblers are very superstitious and, knowing about Brown's dislike of the desert and the way the horses acted, they were convinced the horses had heard from the spirit of the departed and were trying their best to prevent his being buried out there.

QUITE A NUMBER of college boys were in camp to get mining engineer experience. A wide-brim Stetson, wool jacket, whipcord riding pants, and high-top laced boots was their usual garb and a side gun, too, mostly automatic. These early models used steel-jacketed bullets and unless one knew how to make them shoot single, one pull on the trigger emptied all eight or nine shells.

Often in the night one would hear what sounded like a machine gun blast, but it was only one of the kids, a few drinks aboard, firing his gun whoopee, whammo and not always straight up in the air. Except for the brick and concrete buildings in the business district, most were built of either one-by-twelve inch wooden walls or corrugated iron. I have been shown a number of holes where a steel-jacketed bullet had penetrated one wooden wall, crossed the room, and exited through the other wall, but on only one occasion have I seen this actually happen.

Once during a lull in the early morning hours in the Turf Club, Murray Collins, our piano player, and I were talking to Jimmy Cleve, the roulette dealer. Big Jim, as we called him, had been on a chair adjusting his overhead light and was just getting down when we heard a ping-ping just like that—an almost spent bullet on its wall-to-wall path.

We noticed Jim's tall cowboy hat was slightly askew. Taking it off, he saw a hole through the peak, and as we all congratulated him on his narrow escape, he realized what had happened and called for a drink to steady his nerves. Fully ten minutes after it had happened, he keeled over and slid to the floor. We carried him to a booth in the rear and called a doctor. After an examination, the doc gave out with his diagnosis. Big Jim, our strong man and bouncer, the muscular guy who got admiring glances from the dance hall girls and whom we all envied a little, had just plain fainted like a young gal. It took him a long time to live down that doctor's report.

I don't recall if I ever heard Slim's real name, if he had one. But Slim's Mulligan Joint was a good place to hang out since the food was good, portions were generous, prices were reasonable, and he loved his roughneck patrons. Imagine, if you can, a bowl of chili con carne with crackers for a quarter, or a bowl of stew with bread and coffee for 30c, and "Ham and" with German fried for 40c.

I had always said I'd never stoop so low as to eat burro meat, no matter how hungry, but Slim made a true believer of me. Once the Salt Lake line had serious washouts on both sides of Vegas where we got most of our supplies, and the line was tied up for several weeks. Naturally, not having the refrigeration of today, the town soon ran out of meat, butter, and fresh vegetables. One day after this episode had long passed, someone asked Slim how he could have had meat in the stew all the time the railroad was tied up. He casually replied, "Lotsa game around." It slowly dawned on us what he meant—all those wild burros running loose! I knew he had converted me.

With entertainment so scarce, most anything was a diversion. Even a dog fight or a couple of miners slugging it out in an alley would soon draw a crowd. We had an occasional Sunday afternoon ball game, but we booed the umpires so much that they would only volunteer to serve one inning. This gave each ump a good chance to rule in favor of the team he was betting on and against the other team. Being just scrub teams, not ball players, the final score was fantastic, sounding like the close of a pro basketball game today.

Most people think of a mining camp as rough and rugged and sometimes a little dangerous and perhaps they are right. But the miners, gamblers, saloonkeepers, and dance hall girls were the most kind-hearted and generous folk in the world. If someone was reported ill in his shack, one or more of the girls would cook a tasty broth or something more substantial, make a poultice, or go down and change bandages, whatever the need might be.

When there was an emergency—a person needing hospital care or a stranded family needing assistance—a subscription or donation list would be started immediately by these same folks and the needy would be getting aid long before the better element uptown even heard about it. To those living on the right side of the tracks these people

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might be the untouchables, but they sure as hell practiced the Golden Rule.

BILL RUSTLER was a gambler, and his girl friend, Madeline, was a dance hall performer. They were real sweethearts, and like the pair in that "Frankie and Johnny" song, they were intensely jealous of each other. The whole town, or at least our part of town, knew them and enjoyed their antics. They'd get into an argument about something or other—jealousy has no reason—and in a minute they'd be cussing and battling. Then, in a couple of hours, they could be found in a booth at the rear of some joint loving and billing and cooing like a pair of turtle doves.

One quiet Sunday morning as I was enjoying my coffee at Slim's, we heard frenzied yelling and shouting not too far away. So we rushed down and around the corner and saw Rustler out in the middle of the dirt street pouring kerosene on a bonfire he had started and yelling and dancing around the fire like a drunken Indian. It was much later that day that we learned the reason for Rustler's strange performance.

A tailor's representative from Reno had previously been in camp and had taken measurements and orders for suits for many of us, including Rustler who had also ordered a sealskin jacket for his girl friend. This was before mink became so popular; sealskin was *the* thing to wear. The orders had come on a Saturday and Rustler had taken his package and hung the garments up in their apartment. Later that evening, after finishing her turn at the adobe dance hall, Madeline, as was her custom, strolled around to Rustler's regular hangout to see if she could catch her sweetheart misbehaving. Looking in the joint, she saw him drinking and dancing with a gal she especially disliked. Madeline rushed to the apartment, did her dirty work, and disappeared for the rest of the night.

When Rustler came home next morning, it being Sunday, he decided to wear his new outfit. Looking into the closet he saw his suit, the suit he'd not yet worn once, hanging there ruined. Madeline had taken an old-fashioned, straight-blade razor and had slashed the suit into ribbons. This was too much to take. Grabbing her new jacket in one hand and a kerosene can in the other, he rushed out and started his bonfire with the jacket and there we found him doing all that yelling. What happened when they met again, we know not, but they were seen that very same day, loving and kissing again.

The day after our loving but jealous couple had got into this real knockdown and drag-out fight, one of the townspeople, a merchant's wife, if I remember, swore out a warrant for Rustler's arrest, declaring that "this was a disgrace to our 'fair city' and the beating of a defenseless woman couldn't go unnoticed." Along the "row," however, opinion differed. She was his woman and after what she had done to his new suit, she had it coming to her—which she herself admitted.

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He was cited to appear before the local justice of the peace, but because the office was too small to hold the crowd that showed up, the trial was postponed for a day and an empty storeroom was secured for a courtroom. Rumor had it that something unusual was to come up during the trial. Naturally, all this got out a big crowd and the courtroom was jammed with people packed like sardines in a can, almost all of them standing, as only a few folding chairs had been rented from the undertaker's and they were all away down front for witnesses.

The prosecution opened with very few words and the defense attorney, a lad not too long out of law school, had even less to say. But it wasn't long before the judge was confused with all the contradictory testimony, mostly in favor of the defense.

Among her other specialties, Madeline performed an act in which she did contortions on a low-hung trapeze. She claimed she had fallen off it during rehearsal, which was the reason for her bruises.

The judge asked Rustler, "Did you strike her?"

"Yes," was the reply, "but not at that particular time."

Immediately, Madeline called out, "And I can prove it, Judge," whereupon she proceeded to disrobe right in front of the judge and all of us. After all, while the sight of a nude woman in the district was nothing to write home about, in an open courtroom it was a sensation!

Imagine the commotion among the spectators as she twisted and squirmed, turning first toward the judge, then to the prosecution to better point out the black-and-blue marks on her body. The judge tried to no avail to clear the courtroom. After Madeline had dressed and the judge had conferred with the prosecution, he gave a verdict of "not guilty," but did put Rustler under a small cash bond. After all, maybe Madeline hadn't been lying because who in his right mind would mar the sales appearance of his own merchandise? And so ended the nude woman case of Rhyolite.

AT THIS TIME, the Tonopah and Tidewater Railroad was being built from the main lines down beyond Baker and was to pass through Rhyolite on its way north. It was this railroad, when built up as far as Death Valley Junction, that finally brought an end to the hauling of borax down to Barstow by the famous twenty-mule teams.

After Death Valley had become a government project and accommodations had been built for the public, the junction became quite busy as an unloading point for Valley-bound passengers and freight and the loading of borax. In the course of time, with the advent of good roads, trucking became more economical, which in turn killed off the railroad.

I don't think the road was ever fully completed to Rhyolite as I understand the rails were used for scrap iron in World War I. But at that time, construction crews were working within hiking distance of town and the spending money of these laborers surely helped the camp's economy.

Drifting around in the district one evening before going to work, we got word of trouble of some kind at the Novelty Bar. Fred Noble, one of my bosses at the '66 Club (my first job after I hit town), had sold out his interests and had built a new outfit. As he was a good guy and well liked, he was doing a nice business.

It seems that sometime before, one of these track laborers had become offensive and, after several warnings, Fred had grabbed him by the seat of his overalls and had pitched him out the front door onto the sidewalk. Although there had been some cries from his pals about getting even, nothing had happened until now.

Standing about midway up the bar, we were rehashing the evening's events with Fred, and lingering over our drinks. Suddenly, the swinging doors were pushed apart and in came the laborer who had been thrown out earlier.

The railroader, with a knife in his hand, started to go behind the bar, which was open at the front end. Fred yelled, "Stop," but the guy kept coming. With that, Fred grabbed his gun from under the bar and fired a shot right down the mahogany.

Fred afterwards said he was aiming low, so as only to stop the guy, but the bullet hit the top of the bar about a foot from the end and glanced upward, hitting the hombre right in the heart. This was as close as I'd ever been in my whole life to where someone was killed. Fred was acquitted on a claim of self-defense.

WHILE many saloons were operated entirely by the owners, others leased or put on percentage the gambling concessions. When I worked in the Turf Club, Johnny Devers was the head gambler and his pal was Lep, a cool, shrewd operator. Whether Lep was an abbreviation or just a nickname, I never knew.

Lep was a swell guy except that once every three or four weeks he'd go on a binge and become ornery and provocative. Folks would stay clear of him, as he was too mean to mix with. One night, with half a dozen men drinking and with Murray Collins, our piano player, at the end of the bar reading the day's paper, Lep came in boiled and said, "Drinks are on me."

I guess Collins didn't hear him as the piano player paid no attention and kept on reading. Lep, however, took this as a personal insult and walked up behind Collins, slammed him over the head with his gun and, as Collins slumped to the floor, said, "When I invite you to have a drink with me, I mean it."

After Collins had been assisted to his feet and blood wiped off his face, Lep walked up again and said, "Jeez, I didn't know that was you, Murray. You're my friend. I don't know a better guy."

Naturally, this caused some excitement and was the topic of conversation as soon as Lep left. Half an hour later, Pedro Gonzales, who operated a shoeshine stand up the street, was playing

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roulette and talking about the recent fracas. In walked Lep again, trimming his nails with a pocket knife. He evidently overheard at least part of what Pedro had been saying.

"What was that you said, you black so and so?"

Pedro answered, "All I said was that I didn't think you had any cause to slam Murray like that."

Lep reached out with the knife still in his hand and slashed Pedro across the middle three or four times. Pedro fell to the floor holding his stomach. While waiting for the doctor, others did what they could for the injured bootblack.

While most were watching Pedro, Lep walked behind the bar, reached over and took up a shotgun loaded with buckshot. Standing near the safe and turning to cover the house with the shotgun, he said, "Don't anyone try to make a move. Don't even look like you want to."

With that, Herbie Carpenter, working the other end of the bar from me, took a step, grabbed the end of the barrel, and pushed it toward the ceiling. Imagine the nerve of the guy—a little guy, too—taking hold of the gun barrel only a foot from his chest and not knowing how close Lep's finger was to the trigger.

Luckily for all, the porter had stood the duckboards on edge and was mopping with soapy water behind the bar. While wrestling, Lep lost his footing and let go of the gun. Some friends got him to his feet and took him to his room, keeping him there for the rest of the night.

The doctor ordered Pedro to the hospital and a warrant was issued for Lep's arrest. He was placed under, or had to put up, $1,000 bail. After several postponements the trial came up weeks later. Then it was discovered that Pedro had recovered, his hospital bill had been paid and, as someone had evidently slipped him travel money, he had left town. Defendant was discharged and case was dismissed.

So you see that in those days life was not always placid—especially life in quick-come, quick-go booming mining camps. Rhyolite began dying out in a matter of a few years as claims began producing less substantial amounts of ore. Today, only two of the old buildings are left amid hulls and skeletons of structures that once shook with the roar of saloon brawls and hearty laughter. And a man has to trudge a pretty piece nowadays before he can come across the likes of Shorty Harris!

The Cowboy from Yorkshire

(Continued from page 21)

in the early morning light.

Jim Campbell stepped down from his horse and tightened the cinch. A hundred yards behind him the rest of the hunters did the same. Then Campbell jumped back into the saddle, waved his arm to the others and charged straight into the mouth of Yellow House Draw.

"As we rode around the bend we could see the Indian tipis ahead of us," Collinson recalled. "Spotted Jack was in the lead. Some of the men left their horses

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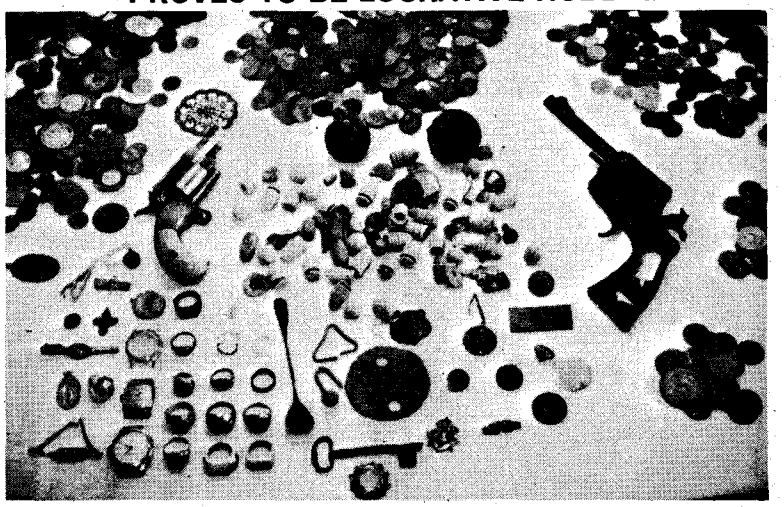

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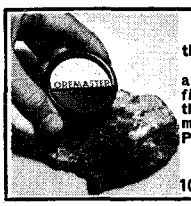

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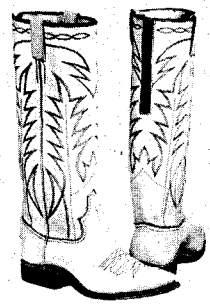

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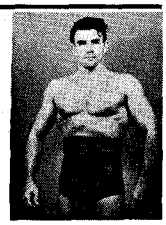

and ran up the side of the draw and began to shoot over the heads of the men still on horseback.

"We were about a hundred yards from the Indian camp, and the bullets were coming thick and fast. We could see no Indians, but they were evidently shooting at us from behind the tipis."

Spotted Jack was the first to fall. Another hunter pitched from his horse as a Comanche bullet found its mark. The thick smoke from the black powder of the heavy buffalo guns swirled up the valley as the hunters raced in and out of the camp.

Then Jim Campbell called for a withdrawal. The hunters wheeled their horses and rode back up the canyon. Smokey Thompson, an old-time hunter whose saddle was decorated with Comanche scalps taken in past battle, was the last man out. Campbell ordered Thompson to take half the men back into Yellow House Draw to flush out any remaining Indians while the rest of the men forted up in case of a Comanche counter-attack.

"We could see no Indians but we rode back anyway, shooting at the tipis," Collinson said. "This time there were no answering shots. We continued forward and found the Indians gone, the tipis full of holes, and a few dead horses on the ground.

"Far up the west end of the draw we could see a faint trail of dust left by the fleeing Indians. We burned the tipis and rode back to Campbell who still held the hill."

The Battle of Yellow House Draw was over. But it was only the first battle of the private, non-military war waged by the buffalo hunters against the Comanches.

"We didn't have an opportunity to be very heroic," said Collinson. "If our men had been sober and properly led, we could have whipped half the Comanche tribe. But who could handle thirty or forty half-drunk buffalo hunters?

"We got licked and well licked."

THE HUNTERS set off on a follow-up expedition under Jim Campbell, but Frank Collinson did not go along. He went instead to Fort Griffin, a rough and ready fort and town where many of the buffalo hunters fitted out for expeditions into Indian territory. There he met Captain P. L. Lee and agreed to guide him against the Comanches. They were to meet at Collinson's camp in ten days.

Lee duly arrived with two troops of the Tenth Cavalry, a Negro regiment which, with its sister regiment the Ninth, did much to subdue the Comanches in Texas and later the Apaches in Arizona.

Guided by Tonkawa Indian scouts they headed for Yellow House Draw once more. On May 4, 1877, the scouts found Comanche sign as they approached the lake, and the troopers prepared for a fight. But when they finally found the Indian village it was hard to tell who was the more surprised. The troops had not thought that their enemy was so close by and the Comanches were obviously unaware that there were any troops in the vicinity.

"The Comanche Chief jumped on his horse, pulled a woman up behind him, and headed up the draw," Collinson said. "The top sergeant of Captain Lee's troop jumped into the lead after the fleeing Indians. He made a handsome picture on his fine horse. He had black, curly hair and long black whiskers, with shaved chin. Captain Lee, myself, and ten or twelve cavalry-men were close behind the sergeant, who kept trying to work his carbine. For some reason he was unable to shoot."

The Indian suddenly turned in his saddle and fired his Winchester backward, over the woman's neck. His bullet hit Sergeant Charles Baker squarely in the forehead and flung him off his horse. The troops opened fire together and the Comanche, his squaw and his pony were literally shot to pieces.

"We went back to where the sergeant lay and found the cartridge had hung in his carbine," Collinson said. "He had also been unable to pull the lever or extract the cartridge. He had also carried a good regulation Colt, and we wondered why he had not dropped his rifle and used his pistol."

This was to be Frank Collinson's last bout with the Comanches. The buffaloes were just about played out and the hunters had to find a new way of earning a living. Jim White, Collinson's partner, decided to return to the Sioux hunting grounds, and rode north. He was killed in Montana in 1881 by a small war party.

Collinson was visiting a rancher friend when he ran into Pitser Chisum, brother of old John Chisum, the great cattle king of New Mexico. Collinson told young Pitser that he intended to ride over into New Mexico and hire his gun to "Old Jinglebob" Chisum. He had heard good money could be made as a paid fighter in the Lincoln County War. But Pitser Chisum told him that Old Jinglebob was not hiring gunfighters and said that the story of a vast and highly paid army of triggermen was untrue.

Instead he offered Collinson a job piloting a herd of cattle from Fort Sumner, New Mexico, back to Texas. Collinson accepted and they rode across the state line to pick up the herd, camping at Chisum's ranch at Bosque Grande. It was there that the young Yorkshireman met Billy the Kid.

"ONE EVENING some men rode up to the river and turned their horses loose. One of them was a slim boyish fellow. I was surprised to see only a boy and walked over with some of our men after supper to visit with him. He was supposed to be about eighteen, but looked older when you saw him closely. He was sunburned and not much to look at. He didn't look like a desperado to me. If I had seen him somewhere else, I would not have looked at him twice. There were scores just like him all up and down the Pecos.

"Everything he had on would not have sold for five dollars—an old black slouch hat; worn-out pants and boots, spurs, shirt and vest; a black cotton handkerchief tied loosely around his neck, ever-ready Colt double-action .41 pistol around him and in easy reach; an old style .44 rim fire, brass-jawed Winchester. I should say he was about five

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feet, seven inches tall, and weighed perhaps 135 pounds. He had no chin, no shoulders, and his hands and feet were small. He needed a haircut. He had a pair of grey-blue eyes that never stopped looking around."

The trail herd was being gathered by the cowboys and Collinson had several weeks to spend around Bosque Grande with only one piece of excitement to break the monotony.

Early in July 1878, a group of Seven Rivers ranchers who were warring with Chisum raided one of his camps, and a rider raced into headquarters camp to get help.

"All Chisum hands were urged to get to the Spring River Ranch as fast as possible," Collinson recalled. "I ran to the wagon and took out my Sharps .45 from where it had been rolled in a blanket, and joined the rest of the Chisum cowboys as they headed out on the run for Spring River. The Kid and his party were there when we got there, and the Seven Rivers outfit had cleared out, leaving a trail of dust. I was disappointed that there was no gun battle."

Soon afterward there was a big fight at Lincoln but Collinson missed that one also.

He made the trail drive for Chisum and stayed on in Texas for a while. Two years later he met Billy the Kid again when business once more took him to Fort Sumner.

"He looked the same that year, still the Kid. He was killed a year later. I've always thought that Billy was not treated fairly, because he was the only man ever brought to trial for any of the numerous killings in that country from 1878 to 1880. I do not believe that he had killed for money. He took a good toll but I greatly doubt the twenty-one tally.

"My opinion is, if the Seven Rivers faction had not murdered J. H. Tunstall, the young Englishman, we would never have heard of Billy. The Kid said he would get everyone connected with that killing if they stayed in New Mexico. I heard him say that Tunstall was the only man who ever treated him as if he were freeborn and white."

COLLINSON cowboyed all over west Texas for several years and in 1887 traveled to Denver, Colorado to marry Jessamine Brammer, a Scots girl. They returned to England for the honeymoon and then bought a ranch in Texas.

In 1894 Frank Collinson happened to be in El Paso and met up with John Selman, an old acquaintance of buffalo hunting days. Selman was regarded as one of the most dangerous gunfighters in the state. The two men had met in Fort Griffin and their ways had parted for nearly twenty years. Selman had turned to rustling which soon led him to a clash with vigilantes. He had got out one jump ahead of them but his partner was lynched. After that he knocked around a lot and in 1894 was a lawman in El Paso.

"I saw him shoot a gun or pistol several times," Collinson said. "He never closed an eye, just looked straight down the barrel, both eyes open. His eyes were unusual. They were such a light blue that

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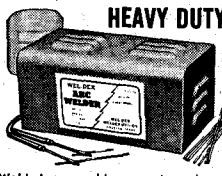

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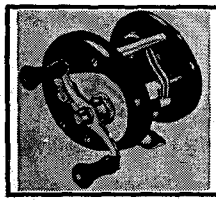

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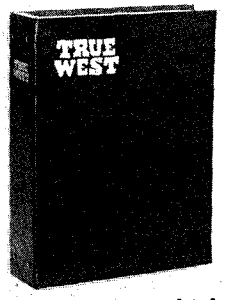

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it was hard to see where the blue began and the white stopped."

Collinson saw Selman kill a man. It was court day, April 4, 1894. Before midmorning two men were dead. One was a former Texas Ranger, Bass Outlaw. The other was a serving Ranger. John Selman had two bullets in his leg.

Bass Outlaw had enlisted in E Company of the Texas Rangers in 1885 and transferred to D Company two years later. He had been an efficient officer and had risen to corporal by 1890. He made sergeant soon afterwards. Then he got drunk in the little town of Alpine, Texas, and was involved in a fight over a card game. Ranger Captain Frank Jones dismissed him from the force.

Bass Outlaw drifted up to El Paso and served under Deputy United States Marshal Dick Ware, also an ex-Ranger and the man who put the bullet through Texas' most famous bandit, Sam Bass, in the big fight at Round Rock in 1878.

When Captain Frank Jones was killed, his top sergeant, John R. Hughes, was promoted and occasionally employed Bass Outlaw as a Special Ranger.

Soon after court opened, Frank Collinson met Bass Outlaw on the street and Outlaw told him that he intended to kill Dick Ware. The lawman had, Outlaw claimed, sent another deputy into "his territory" and the new officer had been able to collect process fees for serving warrants.

Collinson tried to talk Outlaw out of the killing and suggested that they have a drink. In Ernest Bridge's saloon they met John Selman. Collinson and Selman decided to take Bass Outlaw back to his room. The latter agreed but insisted on introducing them first to his current girl friend, a red-light girl who worked in Tillie Howard's brothel. Selman and Collinson decided to humor Outlaw and went along.

The girl was busy with a client which infuriated the former Ranger. He staggered downstairs into the basement cursing loudly. Seconds later a shot was heard. Collinson guessed that Outlaw had dropped his gun in the dark.

At the sound of the shot Tillie Howard began to blow her police whistle and Ranger Private Joe McKidrict and Constable Chavez arrived on the run. They jumped over the fence into the yard and ran into Bass Outlaw as he was coming up the stairs from the basement.

Outlaw shot McKidrict in the body and then put another bullet into his head before the Ranger hit the ground. Selman jerked his own gun and ran at Outlaw. The little killer calmly shot Selman twice in the leg before the officer could fire.

Selman's shot hit Outlaw in the chest. As he turned to flee, he collapsed in the street and a little later died in the backroom of Barnum's saloon. Frank Collinson helped Selman to a bed while a doctor was fetched.

"It doesn't take my flesh long to heal after a gunshot," Selman told him. And sure enough, the tough officer was back on duty in a short time.

Selman achieved lasting notoriety the following year when he killed Wes Hardin, the most famous killer Texas ever produced and said to have had forty dead men to his discredit. It was kill or be killed among the gunfighters in those days and less than a year after the Hardin killing Selman himself was shot down by lawman George Scarborough.

Within a year or two the Old West that Collinson had known was gone forever. It was time to settle down. Later he bought a silver mine in Mexico and made a great deal of money from it.

On one occasion after the turn of the century he met up with the Mexican bandit Pancho Villa. The brigand chief was talking to the mayor of the little town of Santa Eulalia, the nearest town to Collinson's mine.

"The two men appeared to be the best of friends," Collinson said. "Villa often threw back his big head and laughed uproariously, and his white teeth gleamed in the sunlight and contrasted strikingly with his dark skin. His lips were thick, and he had a heavy black moustache. His black eyes were far apart, and his big chest was like a beer keg. He was about thirty years of age at this time."

Soon afterwards Collinson heard that Villa had ordered that same mayor to be hanged from the tramway tower at the Santo Domingo Mine. That was the kind of quixotic man Pancho Villa became.

Frank Collinson raised his family, grew old gracefully and managed to stay fit. He was still riding the range when he was well over eighty. He died in 1943 at the age of eighty-seven. His wife outlived him by ten years and then joined the old cowboy in the little cemetery at Clarendon, Texas.

Those Murdering Herricks

(Continued from page 27)

and Grand (now Colorado) Rivers. During the remaining months of 1881 all supplies were freighted in from Gunnison, and there were no stores—not even a saloon. By early 1882, though, Grand Junction had become the supply center for all the outlying ranches.

The valley proved fertile and productive, and many settlers harvested good crops in '82. It is about fifteen miles across, and ringed by mountains except to the west; sagebrush and desert mark the entrance into Utah Territory. Kannah Creek, fed by the melting snows of the mountains, wanders through the semi-desert land outside the valley. Here the Herricks established their home, and by 1883 had achieved a measure of prosperity.

Herrick, a slender, long-legged man in his middle thirties, offered little resistance when Maggie left him. Within a month he'd found a new cook-housekeeper for the ranch. Margarette Thompson, a widow with a nine-year-old daughter, had moved from Gunnison looking for work, and Henry liked her. She was a tall, attractive brunette, about thirty, her appearance marred only by the lack of several front teeth.

Mr. Green, the hotel manager, had forgotten about Maggie until he saw her in the lobby the next morning after her arrival. He wondered idly then if Henry

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had received his warning, and nodded to Maggie as she conversed with a rancher from lower Grand Valley.

Maggie was a blonde with sun-streaked hair. She'd been fairly attractive when she married Henry, but the years had taken their toll. Sunburn had given her skin a leathery texture, and she'd added considerable weight. Her disposition hadn't changed, though, for when she learned of Margarette's status, she had hurried back to Grand Junction.

SO IT WAS on the morning of July 26, Maggie Herrick hired a horse from a livery stable and rode toward the Kannah Creek ranch. She was armed with a pistol she'd borrowed from the rancher, having told him she wanted to "kill a rat in her room." She took the ferry across the Grand and rode the dusty, narrow road leading out of the valley.

About five miles from town, as her horse plodded up the slope of a shale hill, she noticed a team and wagon approaching. Maggie had halted the horse at a curve, leaving room for the wagon to pass, when she recognized her ex-husband as the driver.

Henry stopped his team as Maggie's horse swung broadside to block the road. Surprise showed on his face when he recognized her.

"Maggie!" he exclaimed, and Margarette Thompson slid closer to him on the seat.

"So this is the woman you're living with!" Contempt revealed itself in Maggie's gestures and she cursed Henry, accusing him of adultery all the while she was crowding her unwilling mount closer to the wagon.

Henry's face flamed red with anger at her outburst, and he touched the team lightly with a whip, forcing Maggie's animal to give ground. "I want nothing more to do with you. If you think you've any claim to my ranch, you'll have to go to the law to get it."

Maggie, seething with uncontrollable rage, whirled her horse and followed the wagon. She rode alongside the vehicle, reviling Henry at the top of her lungs. When he drove on, ignoring her, she jerked the pistol from a jacket pocket and fired point-blank into Margarette's back.

"Oh God, Hank, I've been shot!" And Margarette was dead. Maggie galloped her horse past the wagon, leaving Henry staring in disbelief at the lifeless body beside him.

Maggie recrossed the Grand River, rode to the hotel, and returned the pistol to the rancher. A few hours later Sheriff Florida placed her under arrest.

Mrs. Herrick's bail was set first at $7,000; when the amount was reduced to $3,000, she borrowed money from friends and was released. She was to be tried at the next term of district court, whenever the judge came to town.

HEADLINES in the Grand Junction *News* told the second part of the tragic story; it occurred on October 13, 1883.

ANOTHER TRAGEDY

Henry Herrick kills wife with a shotgun! The most dastardly crime ever committed in the valley!

Maggie Herrick had secured a writ of replevin, claiming she owned $2,500 worth of cattle on her husband's ranch. Sheriff Florida accompanied her to Kannah Creek. They arrived at the ranch of a neighbor, Joseph Cheever, about eleven in the morning, and the sheriff went on alone to serve the papers on Herrick. His duty completed, Florida rode back toward the Cheever ranch. He'd traveled only a mile or so when he met Mrs. Herrick and Cheever riding toward the Herrick property.

"Knowing how your husband feels, I don't think it's wise for you to ride onto his land, Mrs. Herrick. In fact, it'd be better if you didn't even cross the creek."

Maggie flared up. "Sheriff, part of that ranch is legally mine. And I'm not afraid of that damned ex-husband of mine, either." And she urged her mount forward.

Henry met them when they rode onto the ranch, and he cursed his former wife until he ran out of breath. The sheriff and Cheever sat their horses, embarrassed by Henry's outbursts.

"You want the cattle, go ahead and get them. I'm damned if I'll help you," the rancher shouted.

The three rode toward the grassland where the cattle were scattered. Florida cautioned Mrs. Herrick about riding through the brush along the creek. "For your own safety, ma'am, try to stay out of Henry's sight."

Maggie Herrick snorted, feeling certain Henry was running a bluff. The sheriff rode off, making a wide swing to circle the livestock, while Mrs. Herrick and Joe Cheever commenced gathering cattle nearby. Suddenly Henry appeared on foot, carelessly holding a double-barreled shotgun in his hand.

Maggie reined in, suddenly afraid. Henry cursed her again. "You damned murderess, get the hell off my land!" Cheever was close by, but reluctant to match his six-gun against a charge of buckshot.

Finally convinced that Henry might be dangerous, Maggie cautiously reined her horse around. Before the animal could move forward, Henry raised the shotgun and fired both barrels into his ex-wife's back from a distance of fifteen or twenty feet. She died instantly.

Joe whirled his horse in panic, racing away in the direction the sheriff had gone. And Florida, hearing Cheever's pell-mell rush toward him, guessed what had happened. Joe confirmed the shooting, and they rode to where the body lay.

"Gimme your revolver, Joe. I came out here on a civil case, and I never guessed I'd need to be armed." He was sliding the gun into his waistband when a cowboy rode up, curious about the gunfire. Noting the cowboy's scabbarded Winchester on the saddle, Florida tossed the six-gun back to Cheever.

"Joe, you ride along the creek and alert the ranchers. If Herrick gets away

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from me, I want him stopped. You, fella, let me have your rifle."

SHERIFF FLORIDA followed the creek bank toward the Herrick house. Brush was thick, and he realized Henry might ambush him, so he pushed forward cautiously. Within sight of the house, he paused for a moment to plan his next move. Luck was with him, for at that moment Henry slipped from the house and, running in a crouched position, made for the barn. Florida slipped from the saddle and took cover before he shouted his order.

"Halt! Drop the gun, Henry!"

Herrick complied and raised his hands.

"My God, Henry, I never thought you'd shoot your wife!"

"Is she dead?"

"With a double load of buckshot, and from that distance, she couldn't be deader."

Florida posted the cowboy as guard over the corpse, and hurried Herrick to town. Word of the deed had spread all along Kannah Creek, and the sheriff wanted his prisoner alive when he delivered him to jail.

The coroner's jury delivered its verdict, finding that "Maggie Herrick was slain by a double charge of buckshot, at the hands of her estranged husband." After the jury's proceedings, Henry was returned to jail and placed under heavy guard, with wrists and ankles manacled.

And there he remained, awaiting the arrival of the district judge, until two days before Christmas. On that Sunday night the sheriff made his usual rounds until about ten, but neglected to check his prisoner before turning in. Florida's office was separated from the cells by a slight partition, and sometime during the evening an unknown person had entered the jail through an unlocked side door.

Evidently a wrench was used, for the bolts holding the metal cell door were removed, and Herrick was spirited away. Next day, Florida found the broken shackles at a corral on Colorado Avenue, several blocks from the jail.

Assuming that Herrick would head toward the less-populated west, the sheriff boarded the D&RG at nine that night. He'd been busy all day, questioning townspeople and having handbills printed.

At each stop in Utah Territory, the sheriff posted the bills which offered $300 for Herrick's capture. He solicited aid from other law officers as far west as Ogden. But he returned to Grand Junction Friday morning without his prisoner.

"I found traces of him in Green River, but none beyond," he told several curious citizens. "By now, those handbills are scattered throughout southern Utah, and Herrick'll be caught sooner or later. He's a logical man, and he'll head south and hole up in some small town."

One of his listeners spoke up. "S'pose he's fooled ya, and is goin' through to Ogden?"

"I hope he does, but it isn't very likely. I've got Ogden covered, and he'd be picked up there for sure."

Various items in Grand Junction's newspaper indicate Sheriff Florida was a good law officer, but occasionally a line or two cropped up to show he wasn't well-liked. One story complained that his treatment of some out-of-town visitors was unfair. Regardless of his true nature, he wasn't alert when he made his trip to Utah in search of Henry Herrick. A later investigation produced a brakeman on the D&RG who swore he saw Herrick in Ogden on December 25. And Henry was disembarking from the same train that brought Sheriff Florida to Ogden in search of him! Herrick was never captured.

ONE OTHER bizarre feature must be added to this account. Maggie Herrick chose a lawyer named Robert Cobb to represent her in recovering the livestock she claimed. When she was slain while identifying her property, the same lawyer was hired by Henry Herrick as his defense counsel. Thus, Cobb was probate judge, guardian of Mrs. Herrick's rights, attorney to secure property from Henry Herrick for Mrs. Herrick's estate, and defender of the man who took her life!

Lawyers, as well as murderers, were busy in Grand Junction during its early days!

Wild Old Days

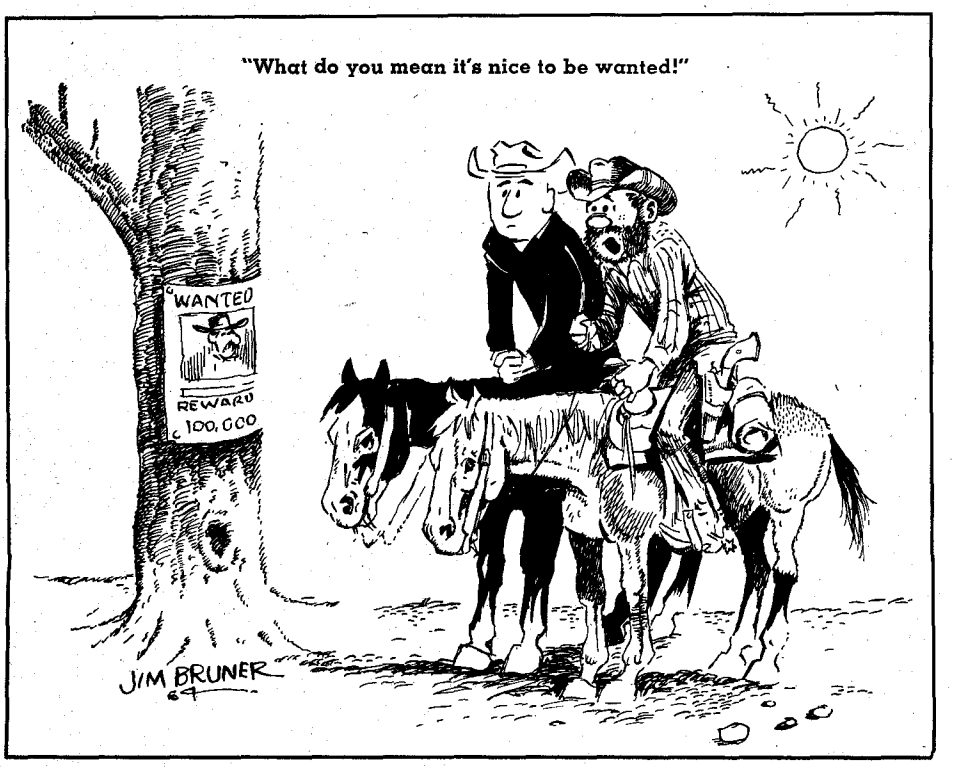
(Continued from page 39)

them off, he found that he was $300 short in his money kettle and began asking questions of his cooks, who naturally knew nothing about any money. Before letting them go, however, he stalled and called in the local deputy sheriff. They made a thorough search of the ranch house and even the cooks' bedrolls but found nothing.

The two cooks had made a batch of bread dough and after stealing the $300 embedded it in the soft dough and then threw it out in the back yard where it lay in the sun and got as hard as rock—so hard even the chickens did not bother it. There it lay and, in the ensuing search, was overlooked.

When Nate took the Chinese to town after firing them, their bedrolls seemed very heavy. And why not, for the wily cooks had broken up the two loaves of dried bread dough and wrapped them in their other belongings. It was some time later before their boss found the imprints of several $20 gold pieces in some discarded pieces of crust and realized what had become of the money.

It had been out in plain sight but no one had looked in the right place, and they never found the cooks afterward.



"What do you mean it's nice to be wanted!"

DOG CATCHING—WITH DIGNITY

By Paul Patterson

IT SOON BECAME clear to Boss Lee that to keep top hands on the old *Quien Sabe* Ranch he would have to raise them himself. Which he did—Dick, George and Young Lee.

What fretted him though was the fact that Young had *dogied* on him. That is, the lad continued small for his age—too runty for a branding pen flanker. A sad fact, but Young Lee remained too stunted in his growth to ever make a hand afoot, so Old Man Lee set him on a horse and put him to heeling calves and dragging them up for the huskier hands.

Young Lee never made newspaper headlines from border to border as did rodeo ropers of his time—Clay McGonigal, Joe Gardner, Allan Holder and that bunch. But there wasn't a working cowboy from Canada to Mexico who hadn't heard of Young Lee, even though his

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base of operations seldom extended beyond Five Wells or the C or Clabber Hill in the Midland-Odessa country in Texas.

The years continued to pile up and Young Lee continued to snake mavericks out of a bunch faster than three sets of flankers could lay them down. Comes the time, however, when, like the Good Book says, "Behold how the mighty hath fallen." A half dozen C hands were in Midland one night with the shocking news: "Old Young is slippin'. Along about midways of the brandin' he snaked one out by one hind leg. We didn't pay no attention to it except to think maybe that he'd got dirt in his eye, or somethin'. But then, directly, he missed the 605th calf clear light!"

Obviously Young Lee *was* slipping; was ready to be turned out to grass with the condemned, the culls and the cutbacks. And nobody seemed more aware of this numbing reality than Young Lee himself, for shortly he went into retirement, to while and whittle away his remaining years in the lobby of the Scharbauer Hotel and finish "dryin' up" as he would have put it.

BUT ABOUT THIS TIME the city of Midland found itself beset by a dire dilemma—dogs. Dogs of all breeds and speeds, sizes and shapes howled the streets by night and prowled the streets by day treeing cats, nipping heels, preempting fire plugs and raising general hell to their hearts' content. About the time the situation had gone far beyond the intolerable, some genius was struck with the answer—which he put in the form of a question:

"Why not hire Young Lee to rope 'em?"

This *was* the answer. But first they rigged up a wagon with a net-wire cage, put a driver on the seat, a couple of bouncers in back to handle the soon-to-be occupants and they were in business.

A hundred fire plugs garnished with soup bones couldn't have attracted more canine attention than this curious contraption moving down Main. Midland's multitude of mutts took to it in full cry. But what these pooches hadn't noticed was Young Lee riding quietly alongside, mounted on a little brown pony that handled like a top.

All of a sudden a strange, snake-like something whistled out of nowhere, snatched a pooch and swung him to a bouncer in the wagon. Then again. And again. And each time it whistled it throttled a startled howl in mid-yelp. In what seemed like one deft stroke Young Lee would snare a mutt, swing him up, have a new loop built and another dog roped before poor Bowser's expression could switch from wonder to horror.

Brownie, the horse, and likewise slipping supposedly, turned out as amazing as Young Lee. Dog roping, of course, didn't pack the prestige—nor the punch—that went with fair-grounding big steers, but it was beginning to have its compensations for Young Lee and Brownie both. For one thing it was far easier on man and horse, not nearly as apt to bust up brittle old bones. For another thing, the pay was even better

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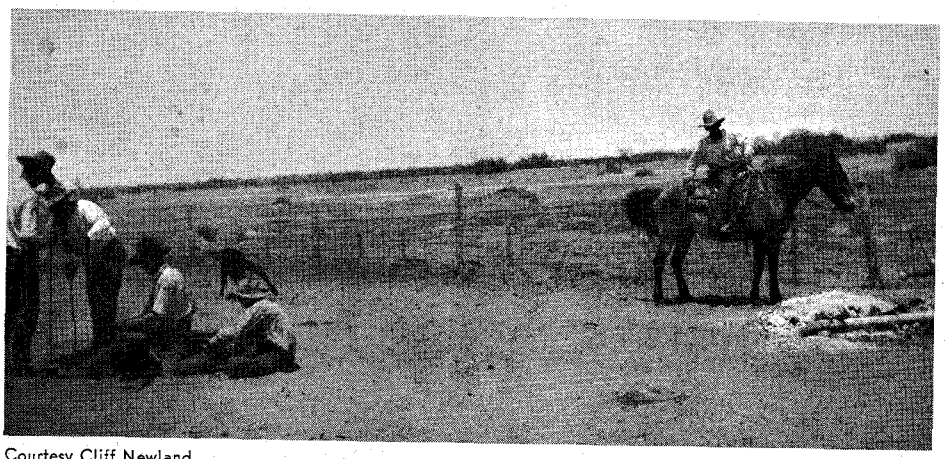

Courtesy Cliff Newland

Young Lee in action on the old C Ranch at Middle Well, about 1908. Lee rides Old Smokey. Ranch hands, left to right: Sam "Scissors" Nix, Fig Moore, Bill Griffin and Big Boy.

than cow punching. (Young was getting paid by the dog instead of by the day.)

For still another reason the dogs, all of a sudden wily as deer, were becoming a real challenge. They had begun to scatter and run and dodge, the last ones being the fast ones. At times Brownie, though quick enough to cut a quail out of a covey, was hard put to give Young Lee a loop before a howling hound could hurtle under a house or through a hole in the fence. For another reason, Young Lee always derived satisfaction from a job well done, whether for pay or for play.

Yes, with Young Lee back in the saddle and little Brownie back under it, it was plain to Midland dogs that they had had their last day. By week's end cats were back down from trees and firemen could again gain access to fire plugs in case of emergencies. The only remaining dogs, what few there were in evidence, were walking the straight and narrow, on leashes at the heels of their masters.

So, maybe Young Lee was runted, stunted, dogied, dried up and finally (they thought) washed up as a roper. And maybe Brownie had likewise passed his peak. Even so, Midland will maintain to its dying day that no human living could have added dignity to dog catching—except Young Lee.

The Death Watch

(Continued from page 29)

out of banks, inundating about 300 acres and forming a lake. In some places the water was twenty feet deep.

When the creek returned to its regular channels the lake was fished constantly with gill nets. The overflow threw catfish, carp, buffalo, perch and eel into it. As summer advanced the putrid lake slowly dried. Stagnant holes and sloshy pools bred mosquitoes, and the good Lord alone knows what else. This spill-over lake contributed more to our death rate than all other things combined.

AS THE NIGHT grew longer the young and middle-age men moved elsewhere. The old men remaining were joined by old women. They talked low-voiced in turn. We kids gradually moved closer to them in order to hear the tales that frightened but thrilled. The general theme was ghost and spirit stories, of the character to curl a man's hair; even though half-scared to death by them, we listened avidly.

Those old folks fully believed that spirits of the dead returned to earth. They related instances they knew to be positively and absolutely true. In particular, the spirit of the recently deceased hovered around a particular loved one or favorite scene known in life, as if reluctant to depart them forever.

One story concerned a young and beautiful girl who had died suddenly just before her wedding day. Later on the intended groom decided to marry. Up until that moment the dead girl's ghost had not been seen. Now she came back, appearing before the man she loved. Standing with her face toward him she merely stared sadly and somewhat accusingly—had he so soon forgotten their betrothal? It scared him, so the engagement was broken. Some years later he again concluded to take a wife. Once more the girl's ghost came to haunt him. After the third such instance he shot himself dead with a six-gun.

The case of the headless farmer was related by a dried-up, little old lady chewing dip-snuff with a slippery elm brush. Mention of the farmer's name drew our instant attention because we had known him well.

Grain was our principal field crop, followed by cotton. This farmer somehow fell in front of his binder while cutting wheat. The sickle severed his head from his body. Just how he managed to do that with the guard teeth in place beats me. Nevertheless, that was how he actually died. From the time of his death on, especially during stormy weather, the headless ghost of the farmer returned to the grain field looking for his top knot.

The old woman had hardly ceased talking, to shudder in self-induced horror, when another next to her whispered, "I saw something white moving in the air down there towards the field."

At once every head shifted to look. We kids followed suit and, sure enough, our vivid imaginations made out something gray gently wafting south.

An old man ventured, "You reckon the boy's dead and that was his spirit leaving the earth?"

"No," his companion replied uneasily, "when he dies the dogs will start howling. They always do; they know the instant a body dies."

"Ain't seen none around. Maybe they been tooken away, or maybe they're waiting quiet-like like us folks."

"Sorta odd. Ain't seen nary a tail of one of them."

This had been noticeable, the absence of dogs. Not one had been seen or heard. Yet, like all other families, the Jeatters kept a pack of mongrels of every size and description.

"Ain't likely he died," declared the old woman. "A body goes out with the morning tide. You watch and see. It'll happen at daylight."

After a period of silence the ghost stories started again. The next one concerned a girl killed by mistake when a posse of lawmen fired into an outlaw gang. One of the gang was her lover. At his request she carried a sack of grub every few days to the outlaws in hiding.

Then abruptly one man spoke sharply, "Wasn't that a dog I heard barking someplace off yonder?"

More fearful silence ensued before talk was resumed. No one had heard a dog. Besides, that man was stone deaf in the right ear.

WHAT FOLLOWED at midnight was possible because of the way the boxing plank house had been constructed. Very few hastily, cheaply thrown together dwellings in that country rested on a foundation. Most were set on wood or stone supports.

The Jeatters home had been built about eighteen inches above the ground, resting on rows of spaced bois d'arc sawed blocks. This space was for air circulation, to prevent mold and rot. However loose acorn-eating hogs and always the dogs, gathered in it. Underneath the house became a den when not enclosed with wooden strips or chicken wire. Litters were dropped there.

Mother walked into the yard wanting to put us to bed in the buckboard. Denying that we were the least sleepy, we wouldn't have quit listening to the gossiping old folks for anything.

As Mother started back for the house one of the old women asked, "How's the poor boy tonight, ma'am?"

"His fever has slacked off a mite."

The old women returned to their macabre reminiscences. They possessed an endless repertoire of ghost tales. No sooner did one finish a yarn than another began. One of the elderly men knew how the Choctaw Indian ghost came into being. Many years before, an old Choctaw man living at Boggy Depot, lower down on Clear Boggy Creek, received a large sum of money in gold from the government. The Indian Territory was riddled with outlaws in those times. Even if a bank had been handy likely the Choctaw would still have buried the gold to prevent its theft. As time went on, now and then he thought of a better hiding place and reburied it.

Late one night, riders were heard

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around the log cabin. When the noise quieted down the Indian rushed outside into darkness so thick he couldn't see a hand before his face. Wanting to make sure his gold was still secure, he hurried for the cache but lost his way and fell over a ditch bank, breaking his neck.

The Choctaw form of burial was to place the body in the ground under very shallow cover. You could smell their graveyards a mile away. Over the dead was erected a doghouse of boards, low against the ground and covering the grave. In it was placed food for the departed one.

None of this food was touched by the Indian we were hearing about until the first anniversary of his death. Then not only did he empty the bowls placed there, he walked from the graveyard to the spot where he met his end. Of course, according to the story, he was looking for his buried gold. That hoard was never found by any member of the family. Each year on the night of his death the old Indian returned to search once more. This resulted in the cabin being abandoned, the family moving elsewhere. They were so spooky after the first year none would make any attempt to find the money. It was haunted and cursed, they said. If found, very bad luck would follow.

One old woman by narrating details of "*the* murder house" was responsible for my having nightmares for weeks afterwards. Desperadoes had seized the family home on an isolated creek bottom. The father, mother and three children were killed one at a time. Their throats were cut and blood ran in streams over the plank floor. It seeped through the cracks into the ground beneath.

A week or so after the cruel desperadoes pulled out, riders passing by observed swarms of blue-bottle flies winging in and out of the open front door. The horses were starved and the milch cows in a bad way because they were unable to get to their calves. When the horrible crime was discovered, neighbors buried the dead and informed authorities, but the desperadoes were never caught.

Relatives of the family arrived from Kansas, taking over the homestead. But in a few days they loaded up and hurriedly departed. They had seen ghosts all over the place and heard the heart-rending, moaning cries of dying children. At night the floor boards moved and creaked. The spirits of the deceased would be forever restless until their deaths were avenged.

One old man reviewed a murder which had happened on the very edge of Olney. A husband decided that he no longer wanted his wife so he chopped her head off with an ax. At the hog lot the body was dismembered and the pieces fed to his voracious swine. We never got the chance to learn whether or not her spirit returned to wreak vengeance. The tale-teller paused for breath too long.

THE STILLNESS around the house and in the timber was suddenly broken asunder by the long moaning howl of a dog under the floor beneath the sick room. A paralyzed moment followed before a perfect chorus of howling dogs followed. There must have been a dozen of them.

Many things happened at once—pandemonium plunging into chaos. People under the trees picked up and sprinted away wildly, crashing into the brush in headlong flight. Even the rheumatic oldsters who had told the ghost yarns experienced no trouble leaping to their feet. Though the men ran fast, the old women, pulling skirts up to their skinny knees, beat them out of sight into the night-shrouded timber.

From the front and rear doors appeared womenfolks, running as if pursued by the Devil. During this panicked spree the dogs kept up an infernal din of mournful howling. We kids not having any comprehension of what was going on, were too stricken with fear to move. We could only wonder what devastating calamity portended.

Mother was the last from the house, not hurrying but in a walk. She came over wordless to where we sat. Perhaps fifteen minutes elapsed before some of the "braver" middle-aged men began returning sheepishly. Gathering in a close group they stared silently at the house. The kitchen lamp cut a yellow block through the window. During this period the dogs quit their mournful, blood-chilling howls and began slinking out from under the floor toward the barn.

Finally Mother asked if someone should not go to the house to see about the Jeatters boy.

A man replied uneasily, "Of course, he's gone. Dogs always howl when the spirit leaves the body."

"We should look anyway," declared Mother firmly. "Maybe he isn't dead and needs help."

The men argued about that but not one of them volunteered to go have a look. The weeping mother, who had fled with the rest, came near and she too refused to investigate.

The boy was dead, they reasoned, finally released from his terrible suffering. Otherwise the dogs would not have howled in the peculiar way they did. Because they left meant that the spirit of the deceased was hovering around. Its presence could be dangerous. Preposterous as it my seem, those people were scared to approach the house any closer. Unknown and terrible events could follow if the now holy spirit were disturbed.

At last Mother snapped, "Humph!" and walked quickly to the sagging porch and into the front room. No one talked, or hardly breathed. The lamplight was seen to move from the kitchen to the sick room as Mother moved through the house. When she came back outside, the group of men were filled with shame that a woman had had the courage to do what they were afraid to do. They waited expectantly. Was the Jeatters boy alive or dead?

The embarrassed silence was broken by Mother while they watched her face in the gloomy starlight.

"He has been taken by the Lord," she said.

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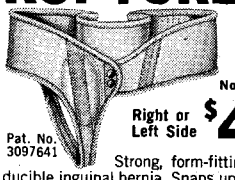

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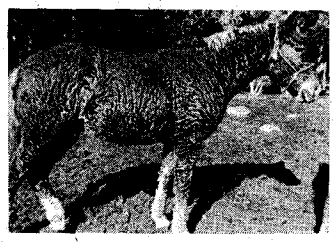


Did Russia Introduce the Horse?

(Continued from page 19)

out food, for longer periods than can other breeds and that the furry quality of their hair aids them in withstanding weather unendurable to even the hardiest mustang. He also has found them more intelligent and easier to train than other breeds.

A few ranches in other Western states have curly horses descended from wild stock, but most of those now raised by owners in the United States were obtained from the Damele ranch near Austin, Nevada. Work is presently in progress to register the breed in this country.

It is possible, of course, that the original stock was introduced by Russian fur traders who tried to establish a colony in Sitka in 1806, hoping to sustain their otter trade in the Aleutians. However, this colony was stricken with scurvy and starvation soon after its arrival and the project was abandoned.

It is doubtful that animals from such a distance as the Ural steppes were used for the sea-faring mission. If animals did accompany the expedition, it is more likely they would have been native to the shores from which the party sailed. It is also unlikely that any animals would have escaped the tables of the starving Russians, once they had arrived at Sitka. If later Russian colonists to California had introduced them, why was the Bashkir never found running wild in California? And why was not the stock listed on Russian expedition inventories?

From all available evidence, Russia has the edge for a valid claim for having introduced the modern horse to North America. Along with the Mongols, who might have evolved into our Navajos, it was the Bashkir nomads who introduced the first curly horses into America, if not the first horse to set hoof on our land after the extinction of the earlier three-and-four-toed models.

"Suicide Ted" Elder

(Continued from page 42)

he promised a few small boys he would give them twenty-five cents each for every black cat they brought him. Well, kids are resourceful and the next day at the climax of Ted's act, the cats, about fifty of them, were suddenly released into the arena. They scurried here, there, and everywhere, as fast as they could. The crowd was delighted with the surprise.

Upon returning to the States, Ted performed at various fairs and rodeos, and with the Cole Brothers and the Clyde Beatty Circuses. He then returned to London with his Irish Hunters. He had to get them ready to open with Tex Austin's World Champion Rodeo in three weeks. The Talbot Automobile Company built what might be called a mock-up car, made of special plywood so the horses would not be injured in case of an accident. When "show time" came, however, the act was put on with a genuine automobile. In America his cars were furnished by the Ford Motor Company.

During 1934-'35-'36 Ted played the rodeo circuit for Coburn and Sorenson, again receiving much acclaim. Then came the spring of 1937, and he met with a serious accident. While wintering in Jackson, Mississippi, Ted went over to a riding academy, where his horses were being kept by a friend, to show some people how to jump hurdles. The ground was muddy and the horse slipped, throwing Ted forward and over into a rail fence. His leg was broken at the hip, necessitating his remaining in the hospital for several weeks.

Ted was already booked for spring, so he bravely went back to work, but it was not the same. The leg was very stiff and he couldn't handle his body with his usual grace and agility. However, he hung on and later went to Australia for the Royal Easter Show and Rodeo. He did not take his own horses but got an untrained horse ready for showing in five weeks' time.

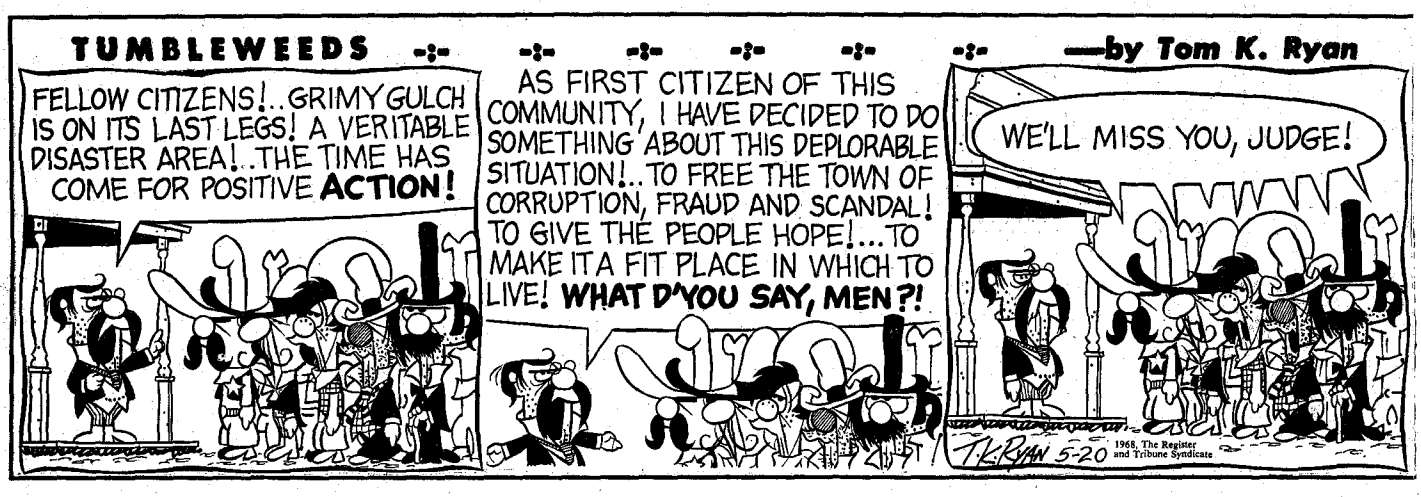
He also perfected a new act. A poem was recited over a megaphone, as if the horse were talking to his master. Both man and beast supposedly had been wounded by gunshot, and both were dying. So dramatic was the recital that the manager came to Ted and told him there were thousands of people in the stands that night and very few dry eyes anywhere. (Ted did not perform this act in the States, but he has often wished he had done so.)

The Australian trip was the highlight of his career. Ever on the alert for something new, Ted purchased four kangaroos which he trained to box, and brought them home. His boxing bouts were booked at various night clubs throughout the country—Leon and Eddie's in New York, among others.

When Ted retired from show business, he made his home down on the Gulf of Mexico, dealing in lumber and home construction, at which he was successful—but once a showman, always a showman, so he went out to California, got a job with Gene Autry, and trained the famous horse "Champion" which Gene used in motion pictures. Now it is a toss-up which is the most famous—Autry or Champion. This horse mastered thirty-eight different tricks under Ted's tutelage. Many horses have learned to roll a barrel with their forefeet but Champion rolled two barrels, using both forefeet and rear ones. Ted could put his forefinger in the horse's mouth and it would walk anywhere Ted would lead him—a bridle wasn't necessary. The many tricks he mastered are too numerous to detail, but Gene was very pleased and told Ted he had a job for life.

However, circumstances arose that made it necessary for Ted to leave. The Mojave Desert was to be Ted's home for many years. He did a little ranching, and worked as an extra in some Westerns. Tom Mix, Hoot Gibson, Will Rogers and many other stars were close friends. In fact, Ted was a friend to even some "bad guys" in the movies. The Indians most always played "enemies" to the white man but when the takes were finished, Ted would be buddies with both sides.

Even now he relishes getting together with former friends of the "old days" so they can chin-wag about the years when the crowds cheered, the music blared, and the noble horse competed, using his wits and strength against the man on his back.



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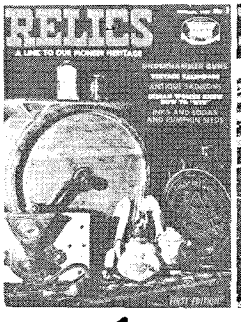

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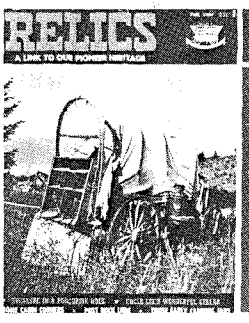

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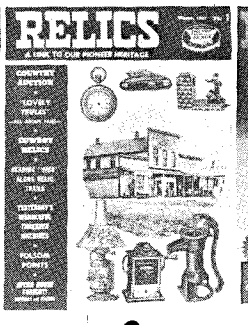

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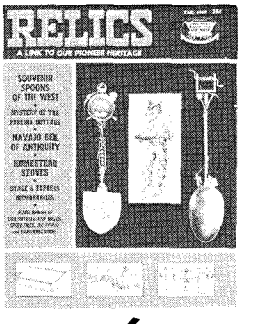

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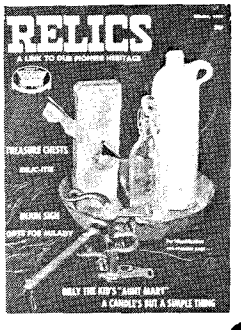

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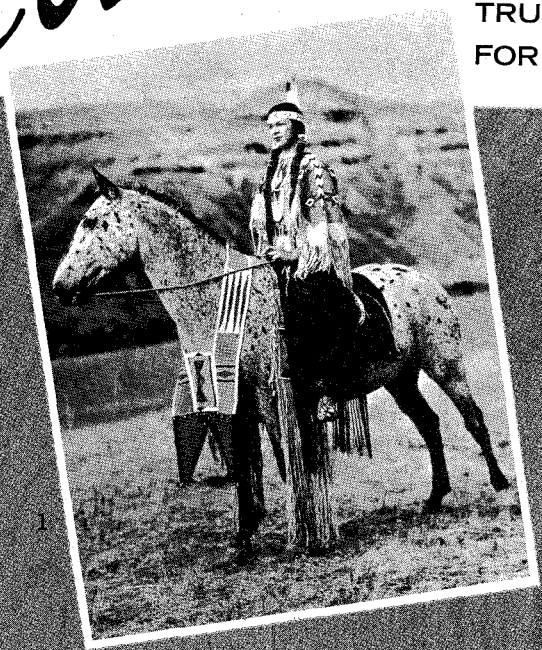

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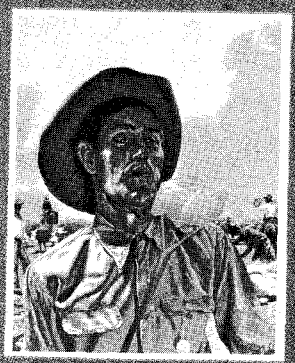

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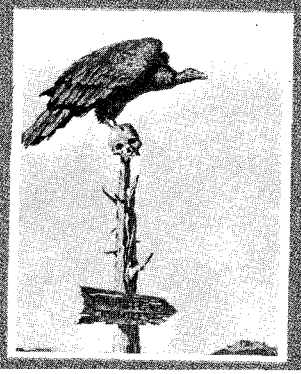

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